

Catabolism

Precursors

Carriers

Sugars

Amino Acids

Nucleotides

Fatty acids

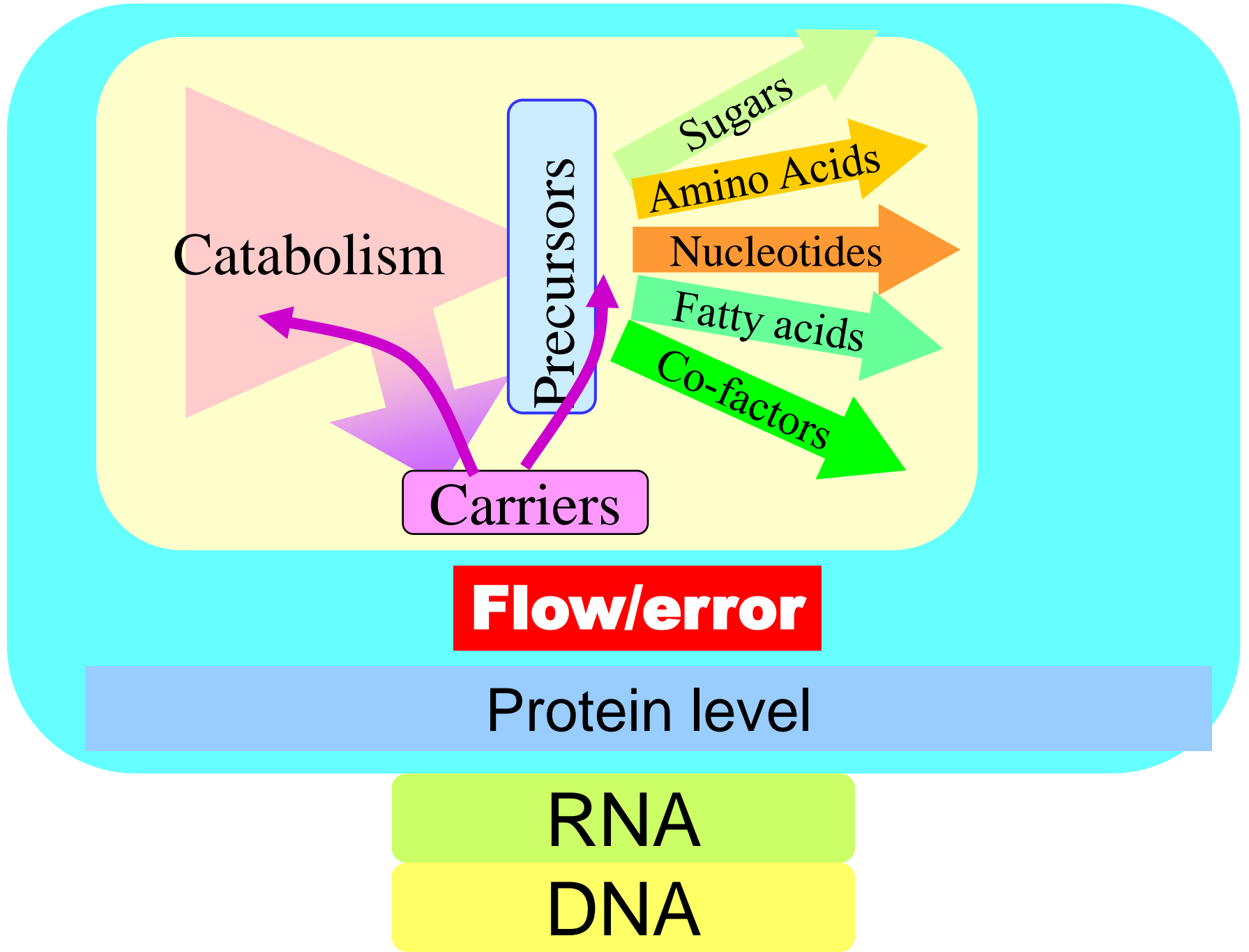
Co-factors

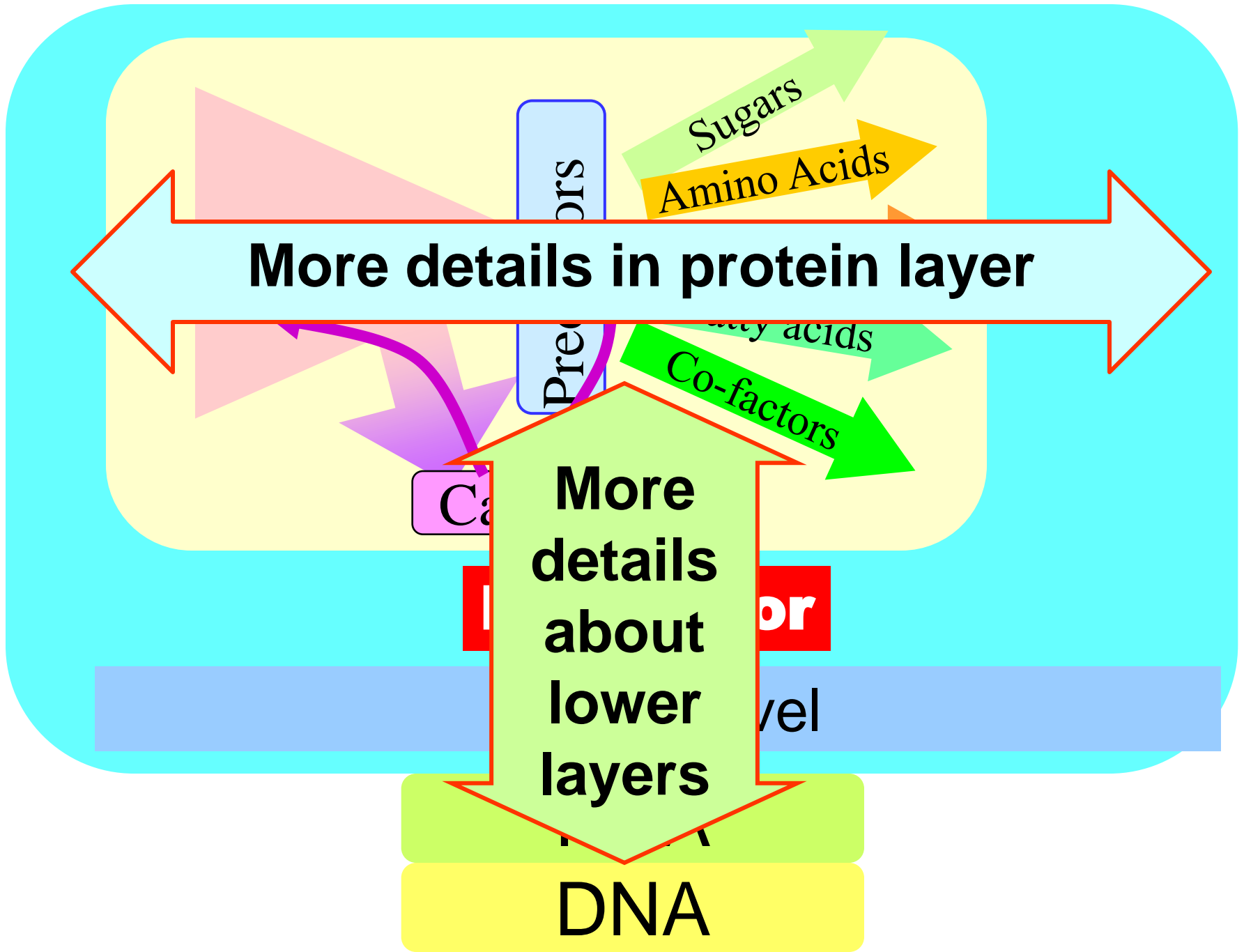
**Flow/error**

Protein level

RNA

DNA





In the much simpler world of the Internet,  
the details are still bewilderingly complex.



**More details in application software**

We'd need  
to look at  
the entire  
industry.

**More details  
about the  
hardware  
design and  
supply  
chain**

An  
understanding  
of architecture  
is essential to  
making any  
sense of this.

We will take horizontal and vertical slices through biology to illustrate the essentials.

**More details in protein layer**

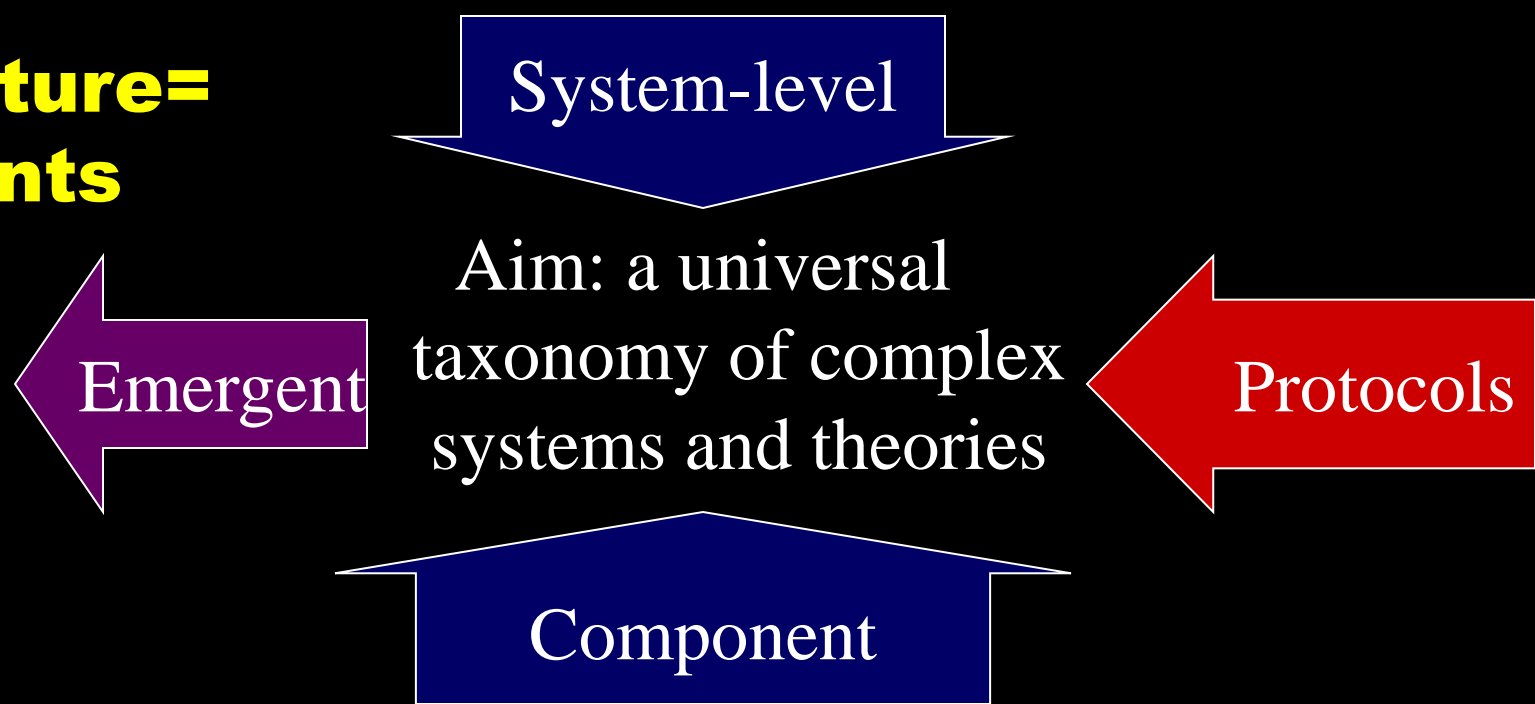
**More details about lower layers**

**DNA**

We need to look at the entire biosphere.

An understanding of architecture is essential to making any sense of this.

# Architecture= Constraints



- Describe systems/components in terms of constraints on what is possible
- Decompose constraints into component, system-level, protocols, and emergent
- Not necessarily unique, but hopefully illuminating nonetheless

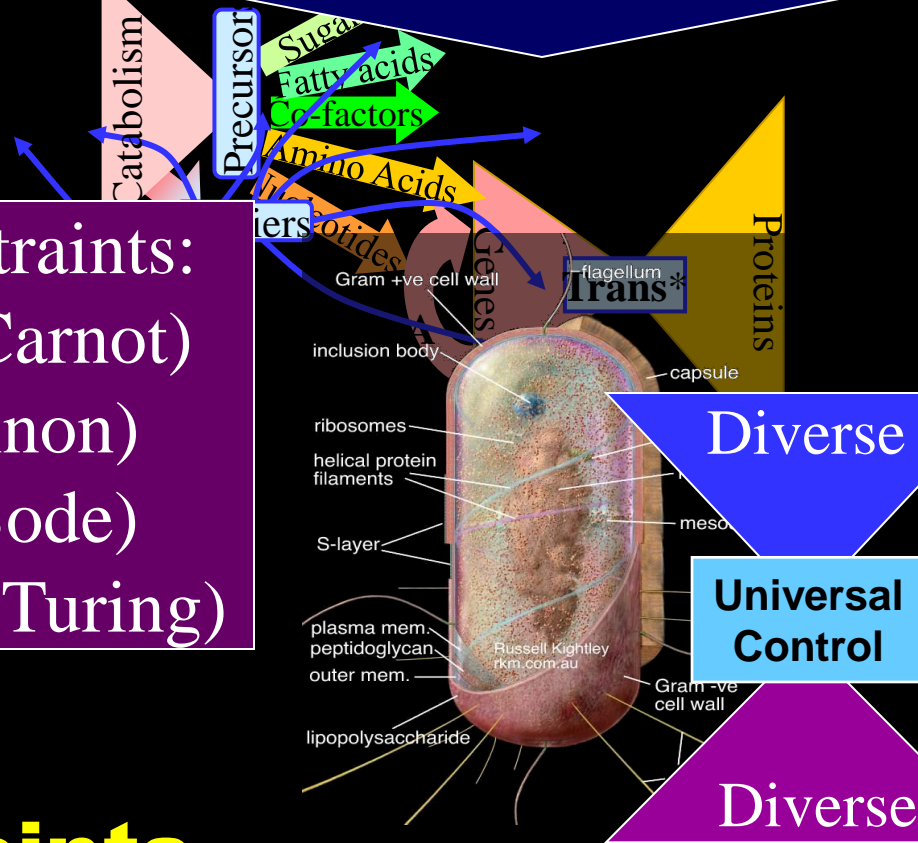
Systems requirements:  
functional, efficient,  
robust, evolvable

Hard constraints:  
Thermo (Carnot)  
Info (Shannon)  
Control (Bode)  
Compute (Turing)

**Constraints**

Components and materials:  
Energy, moieties

**Protocols**



# Essential ideas

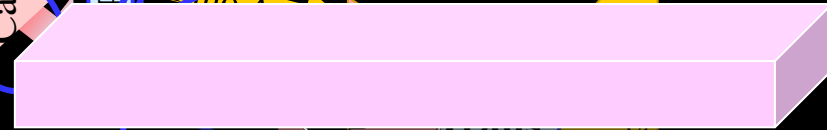
- Listening to engineers and physicians
- Robust yet fragile (RYF)
- “Constraints that deconstrain” (G&K)
- Network architecture
- Layering
- Control and dynamics (C&D)
- Hourglasses and Bowties
- Unity and diversity

Systems requirements:  
functional, efficient,  
robust, evolvable

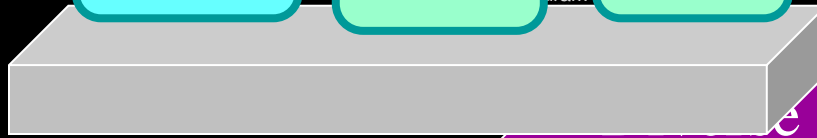
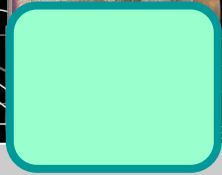
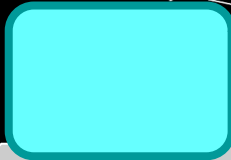
Catabolism

Precursors

Fatty acids  
Co-factors  
Amino acids



Are there universal  
architectures?



Protocols

Components and materials:  
Energy, moieties

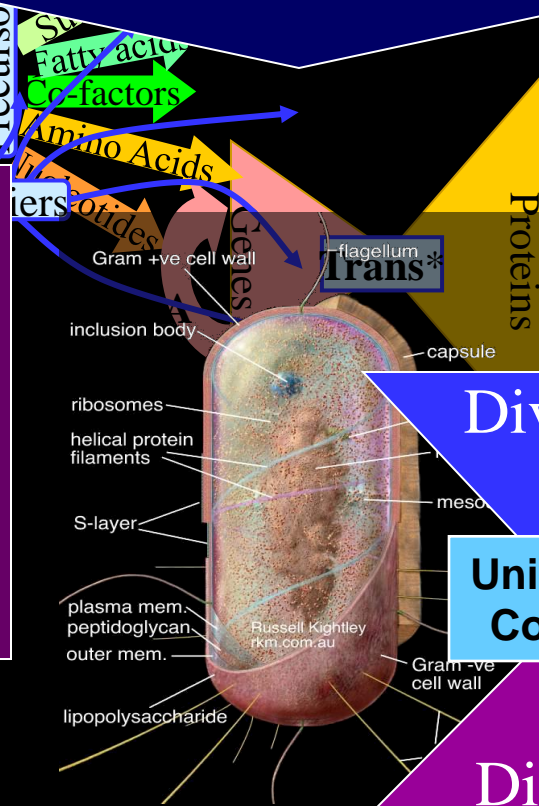
**Constraints  
that  
deconstrain**



Systems requirements:  
functional, efficient,  
robust, evolvable

## Emergent Constraints

Hard constraints:  
Thermo (Carnot)  
Info (Shannon)  
Control (Bode)  
Compute (Turing)



Diverse

Universal Control

Diverse

# Protocols

Components and materials:  
Energy, moieties

Are there universal laws?

## Emergent Constraints

Hard constraints:  
Thermo (Carnot)  
Info (Shannon)  
Control (Bode)  
Compute (Turing)

No networks

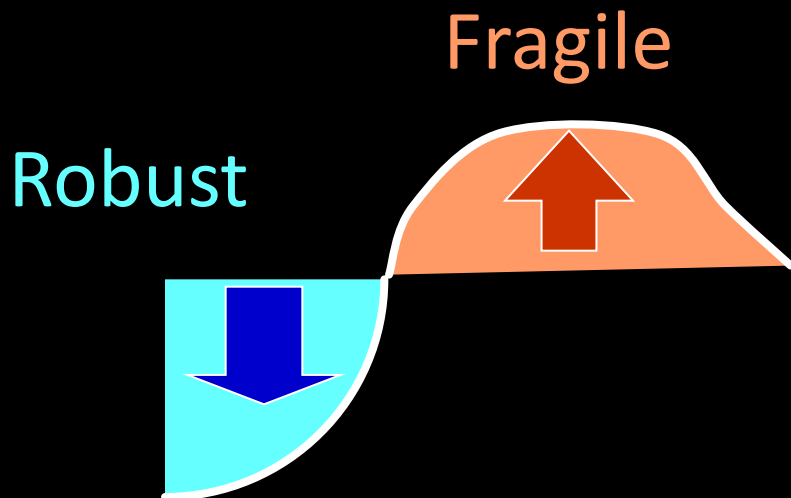
Assume  
*different*  
architectures  
a priori.

New unifications are encouraging,  
but not yet accessible or complete.

# Robust Yet Fragile (RYF)

[a system] can have  
[a property] **robust** for  
[a set of perturbations]

Yet be **fragile** for  
[a different property]  
Or [a different perturbation]



Proposition :

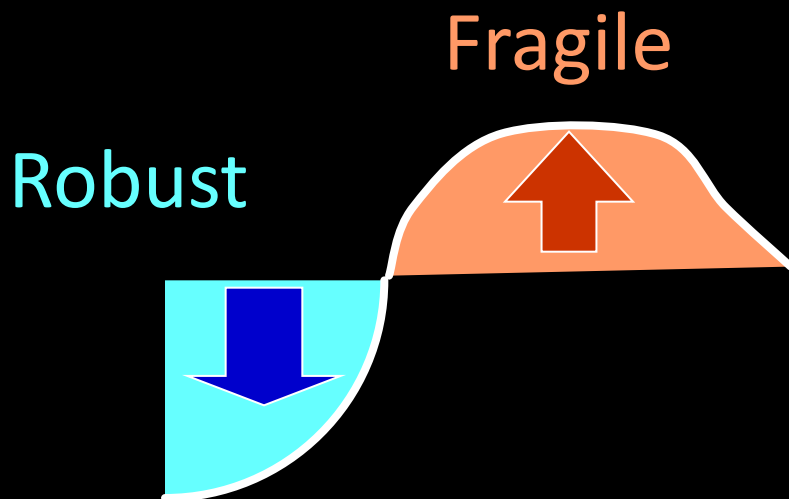
The RYF tradeoff is a **hard limit** that cannot be overcome.

# Cyber

- Thermodynamics
- Communications
- Control
- Computation

# Physical

- Thermodynamics
- Communications
- Control
- Computation



**Theorems :**  
RYF tradeoffs are  
***hard limits***

# **Robust yet fragile**

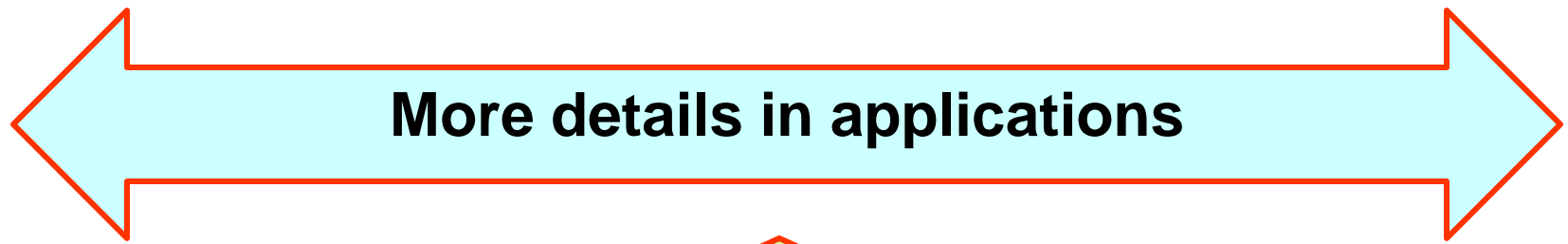
Biology and advanced tech nets show extremes

- Robust Yet Fragile
- Simplicity and complexity
- Unity and diversity
- Evolvable and frozen

What makes this possible and/ or inevitable?

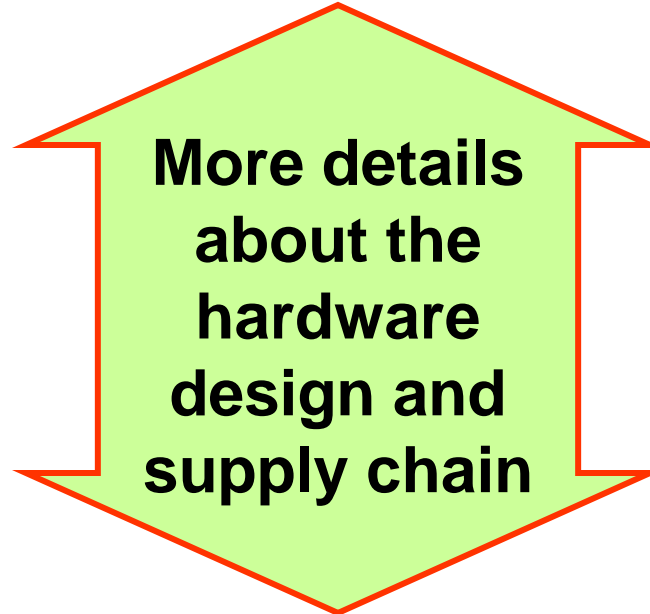
**Architecture (= constraints)**

Let's dig deeper.



**More details in applications**

We'd need  
to look at  
an entire  
industry.



**More details  
about the  
hardware  
design and  
supply chain**

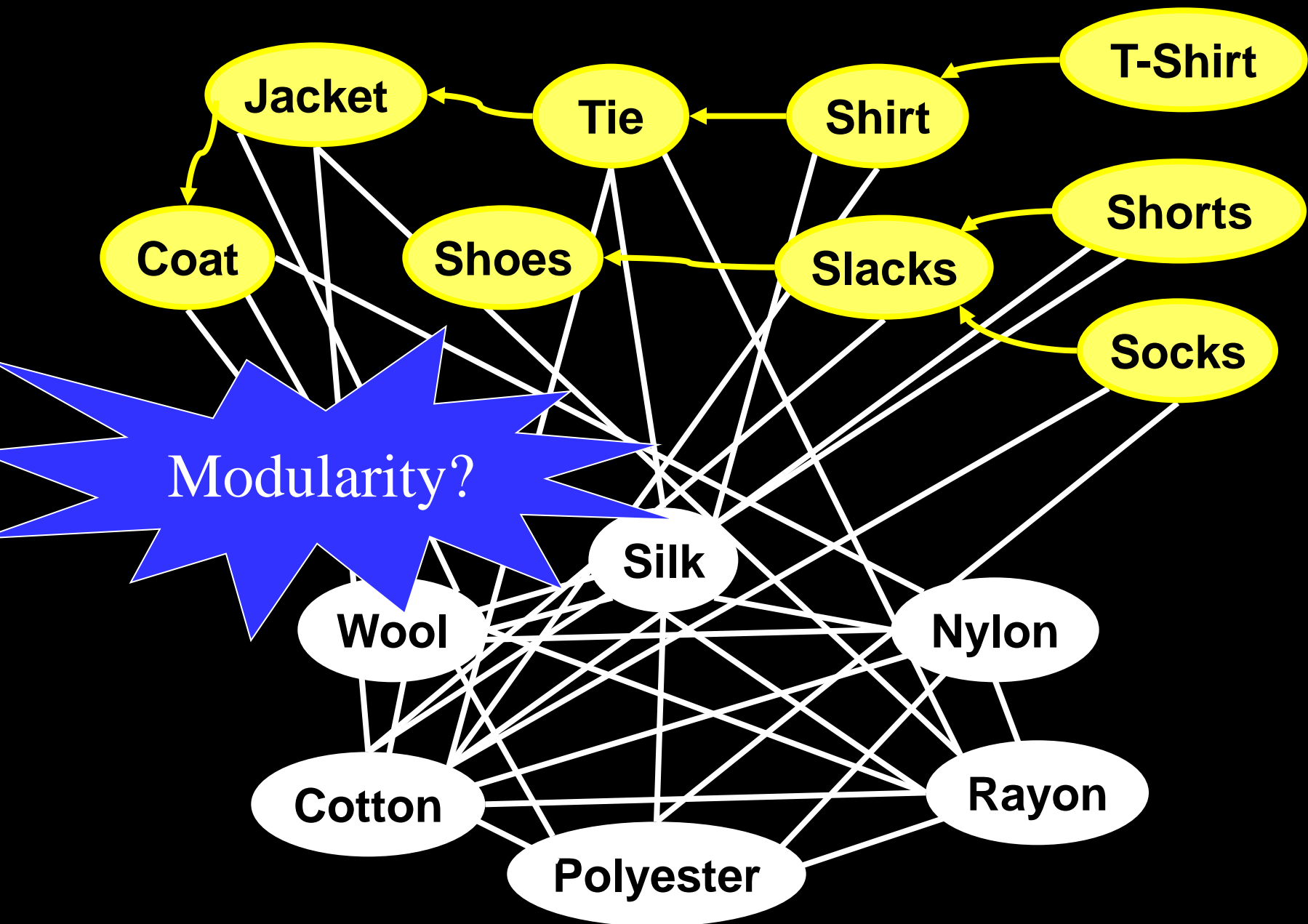
An understanding  
of architecture is  
essential to  
making any  
sense of this.

Is there a simpler  
example than  
Internet?

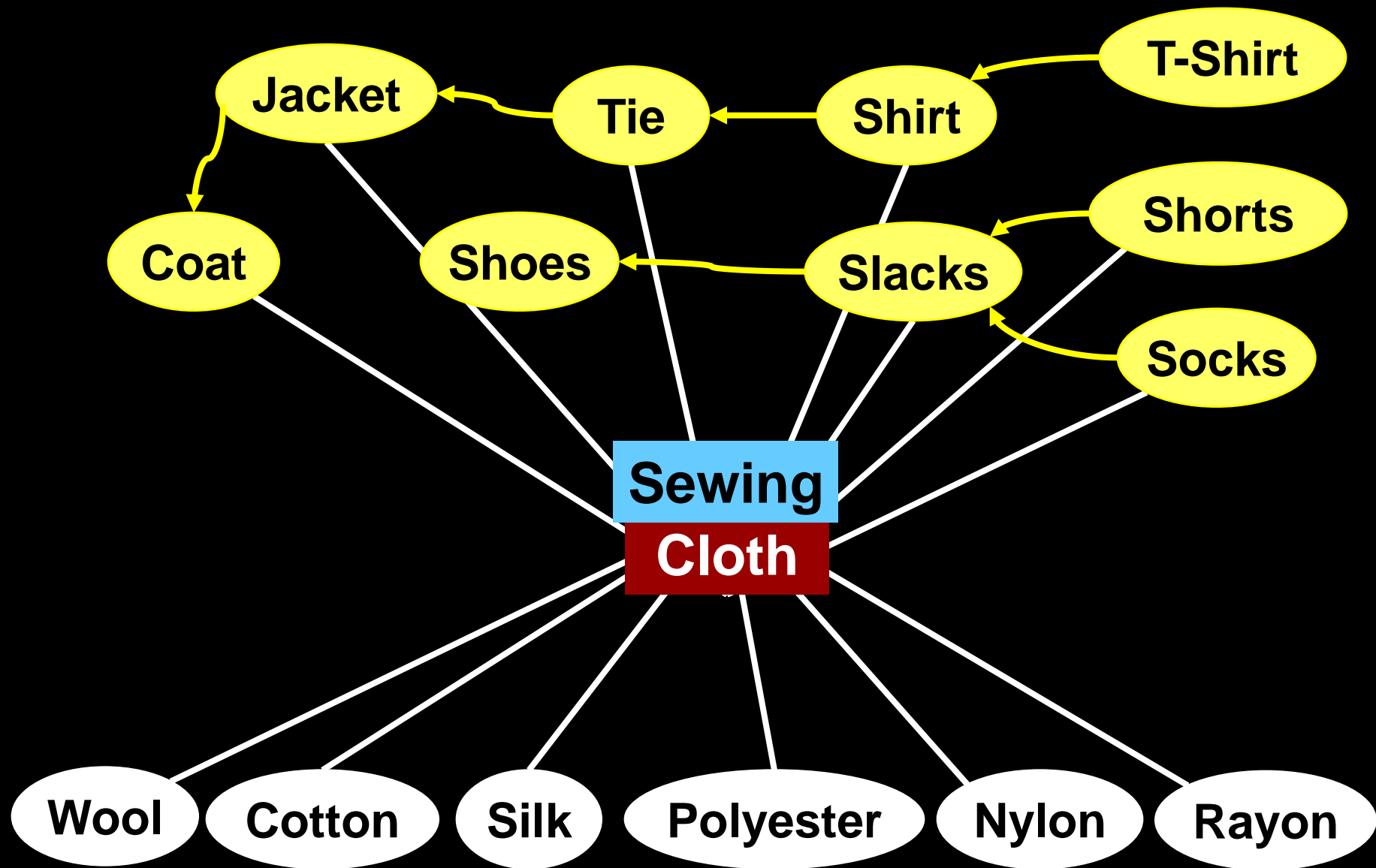
$\exists$  devil  $\in$  details  
 $\Rightarrow$  ☹ architecture  
Jean Jour (alias John Day)

# Other examples

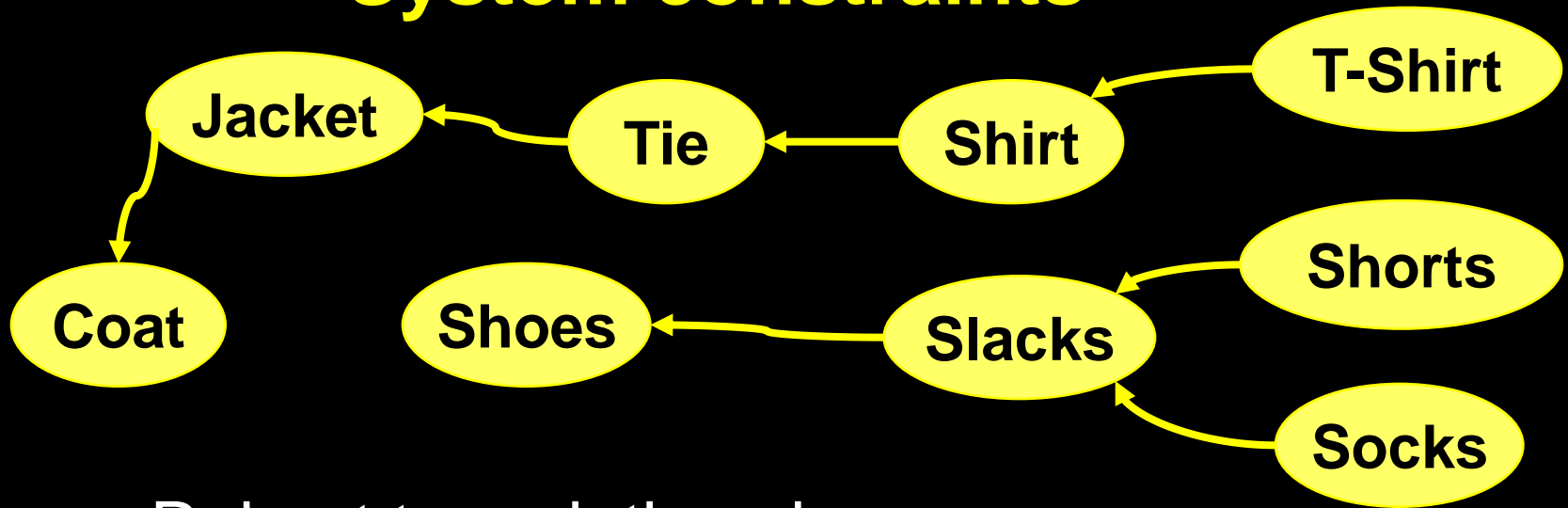
Clothing







# System constraints



Robust to variations in

- weather
- activity
- appearance requirements
- wear and tear
- cleaning

**Wool**

**Cotton**

**Silk**

**Polyester**

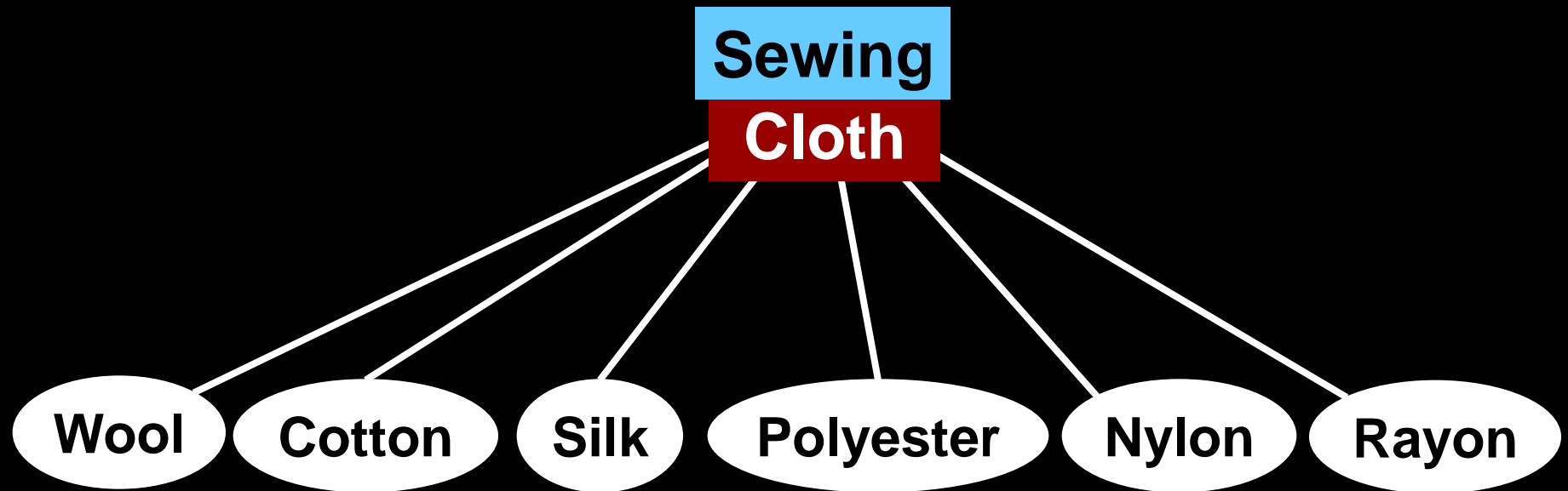
**Nylon**

**Rayon**

**Component constraints**

Robust to

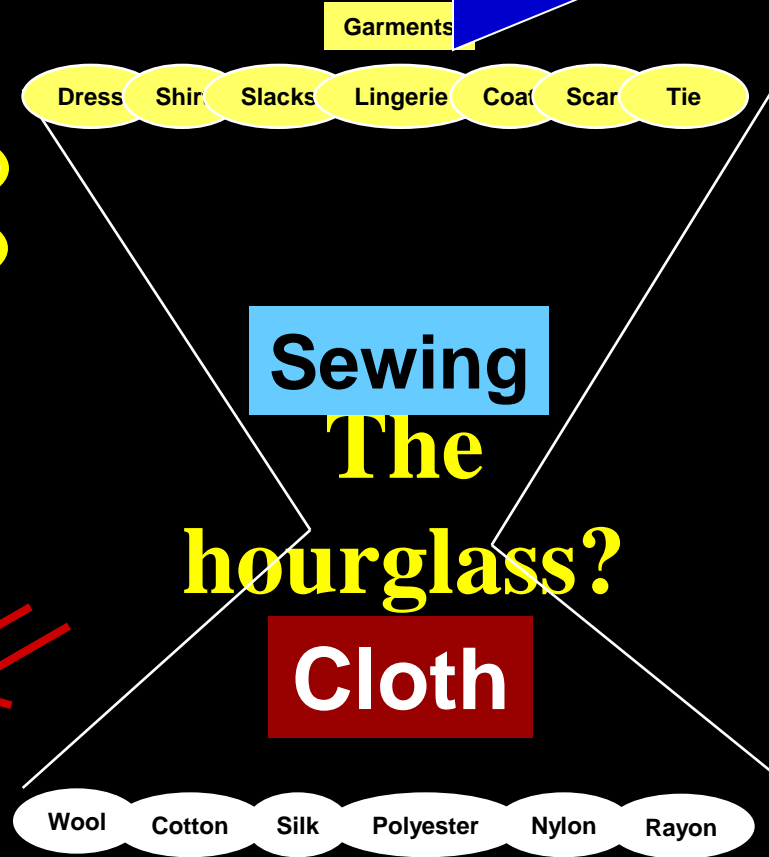
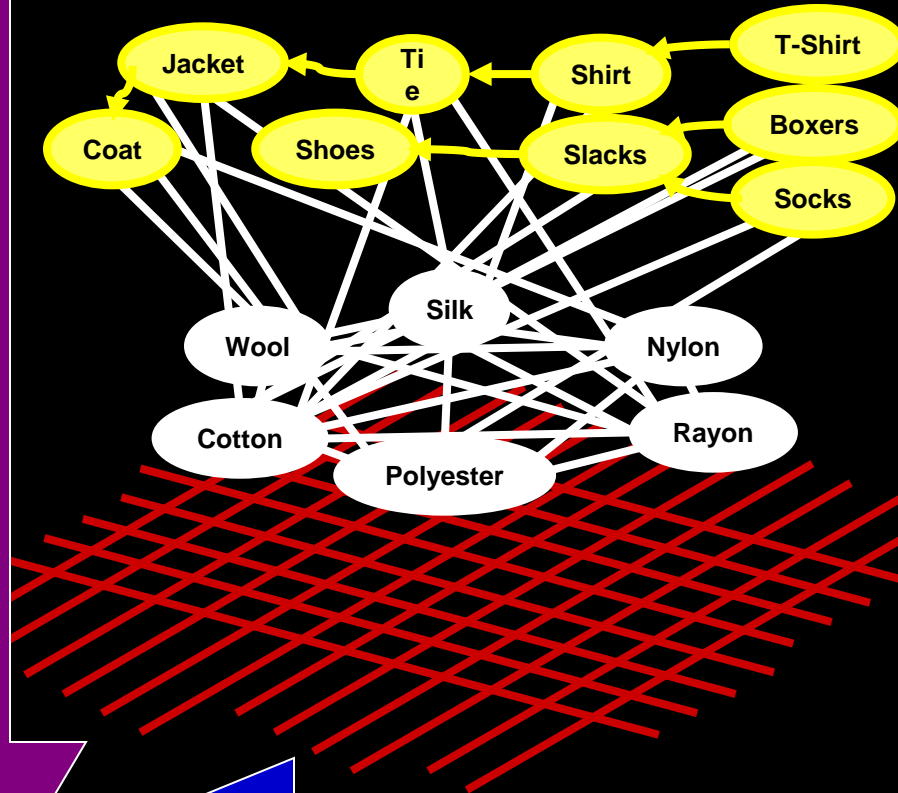
- perturbations to clothing
- variety of raw materials
- *unraveling*



**Component constraints**

# Horizontal networks of garments

Vertical decomposition



# Horizontal networks of fibers

**Garments**

**Dress**

**Shirt**

**Slacks**

**Lingerie**

**Coat**

**Scarf**

**Tie**

**Sewing**

**Cloth**

**Thread**

**Fiber**

**Recursion?**

**Wool**

**Cotton**

**Silk**

**Polyester**

**Nylon**

**Rayon**

**Material technologies**

**Garments**

**Sewing**

Xform

Ctrl

Mgmt

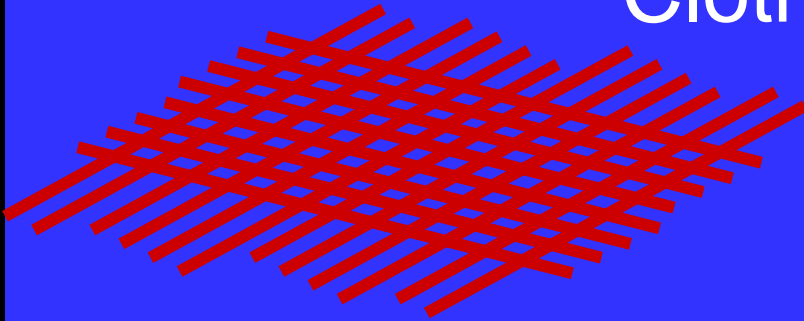
Universal  
functions?

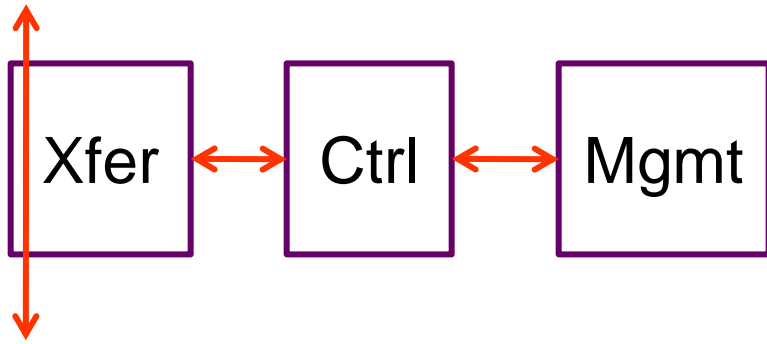
Cloth available

**Cloth**

**Thread**

**Fiber**

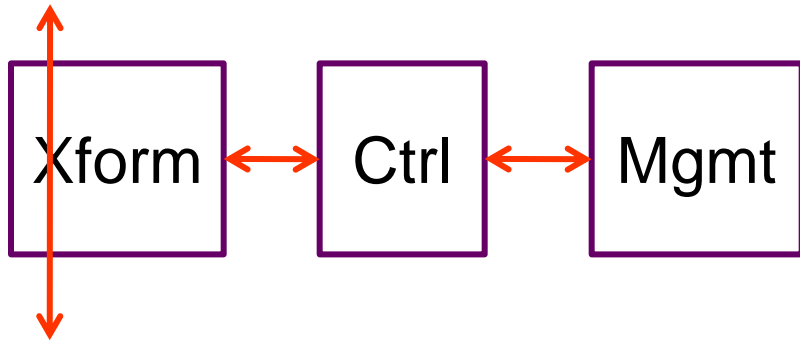




# Universal functions?

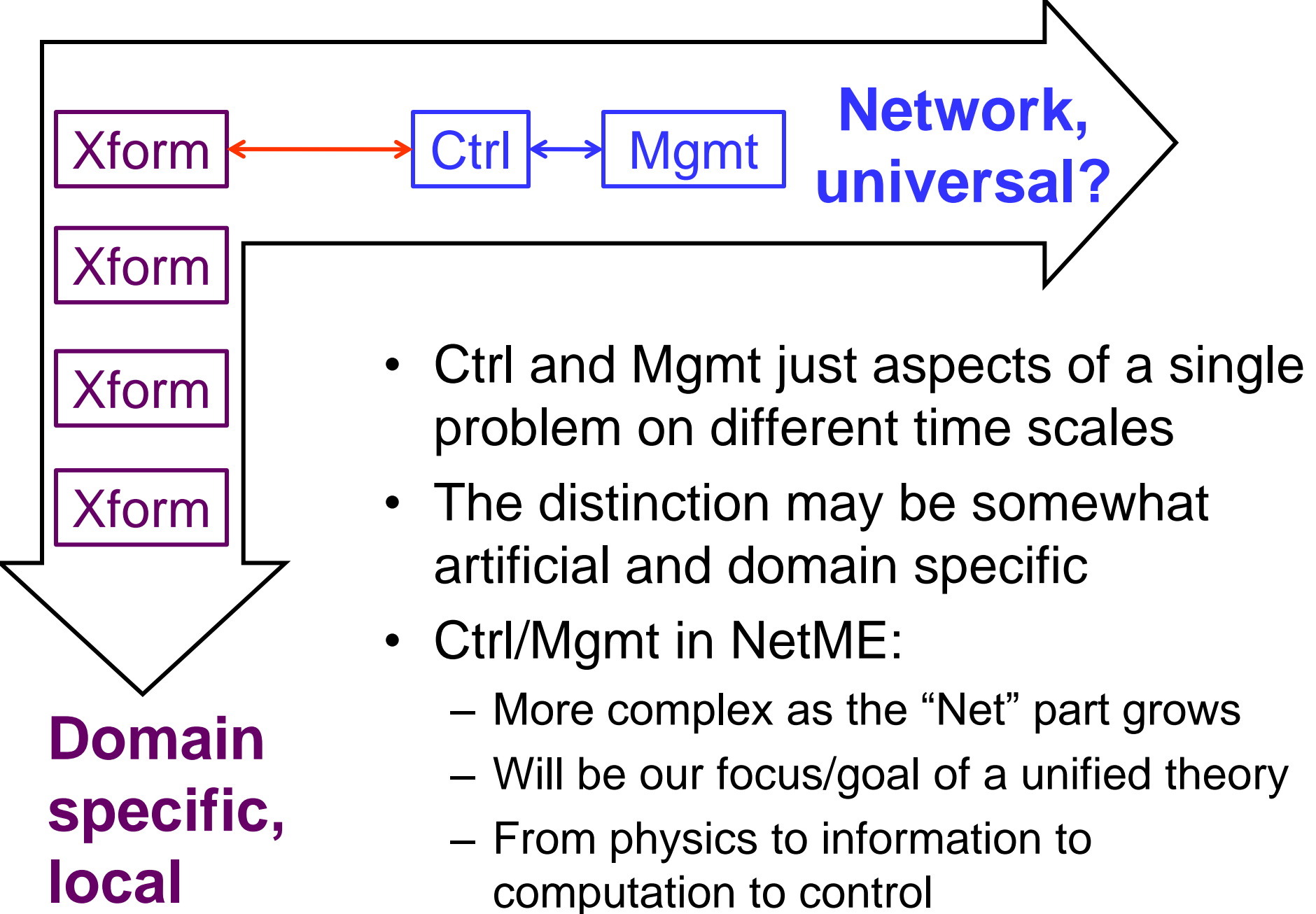
- Transfer or transform (fastest)
  - **Domain specific (data, power, goods, etc)**
  - Depends on demand and supply
- Control (middle)
  - Schedule/MUX resources in time and space
  - Flow and error control
- Management (slowest)
  - ***What*** resources are available?
  - ***Where*** are they?
  - Cost? Risk? etc



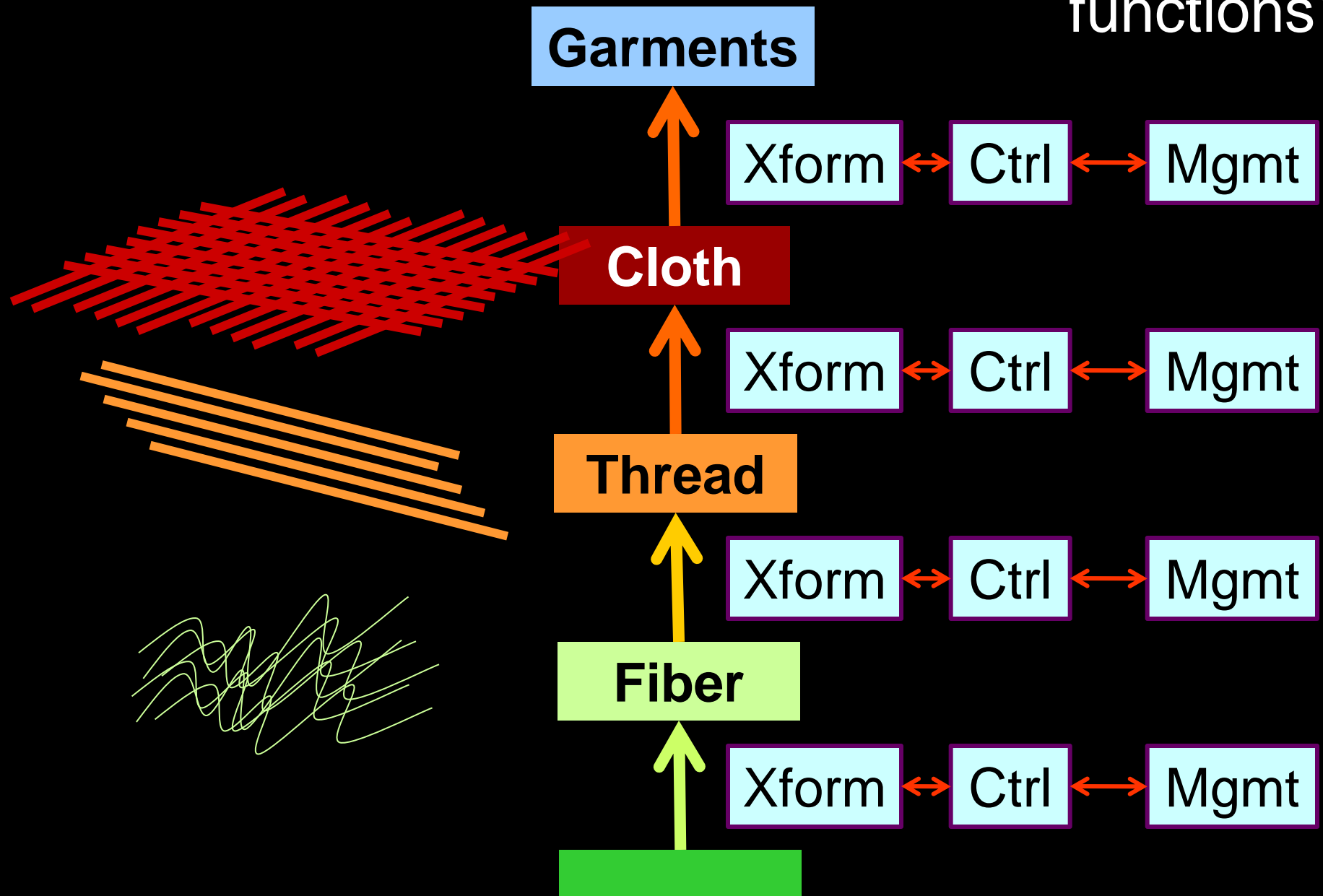


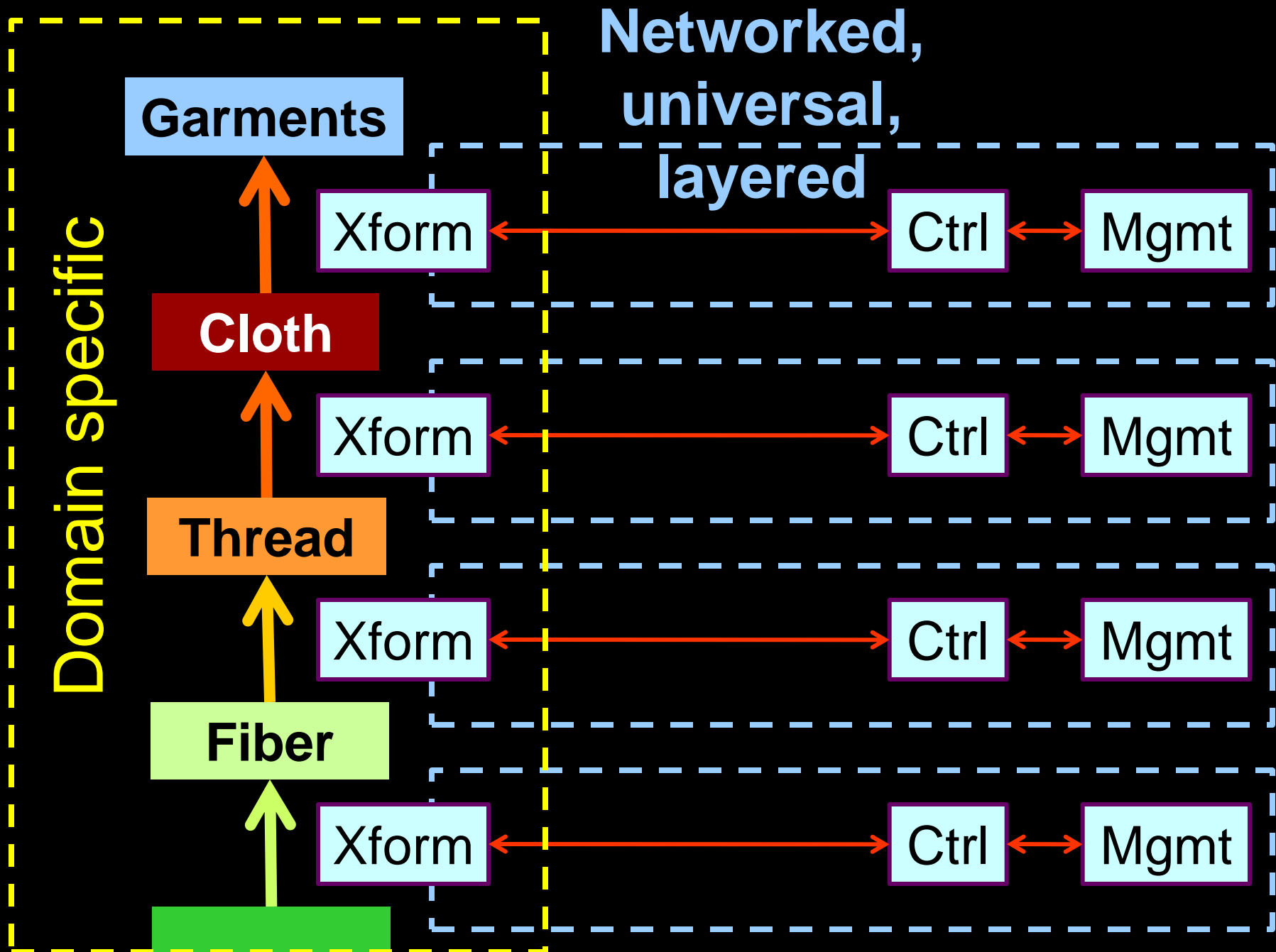
## Sewing function?

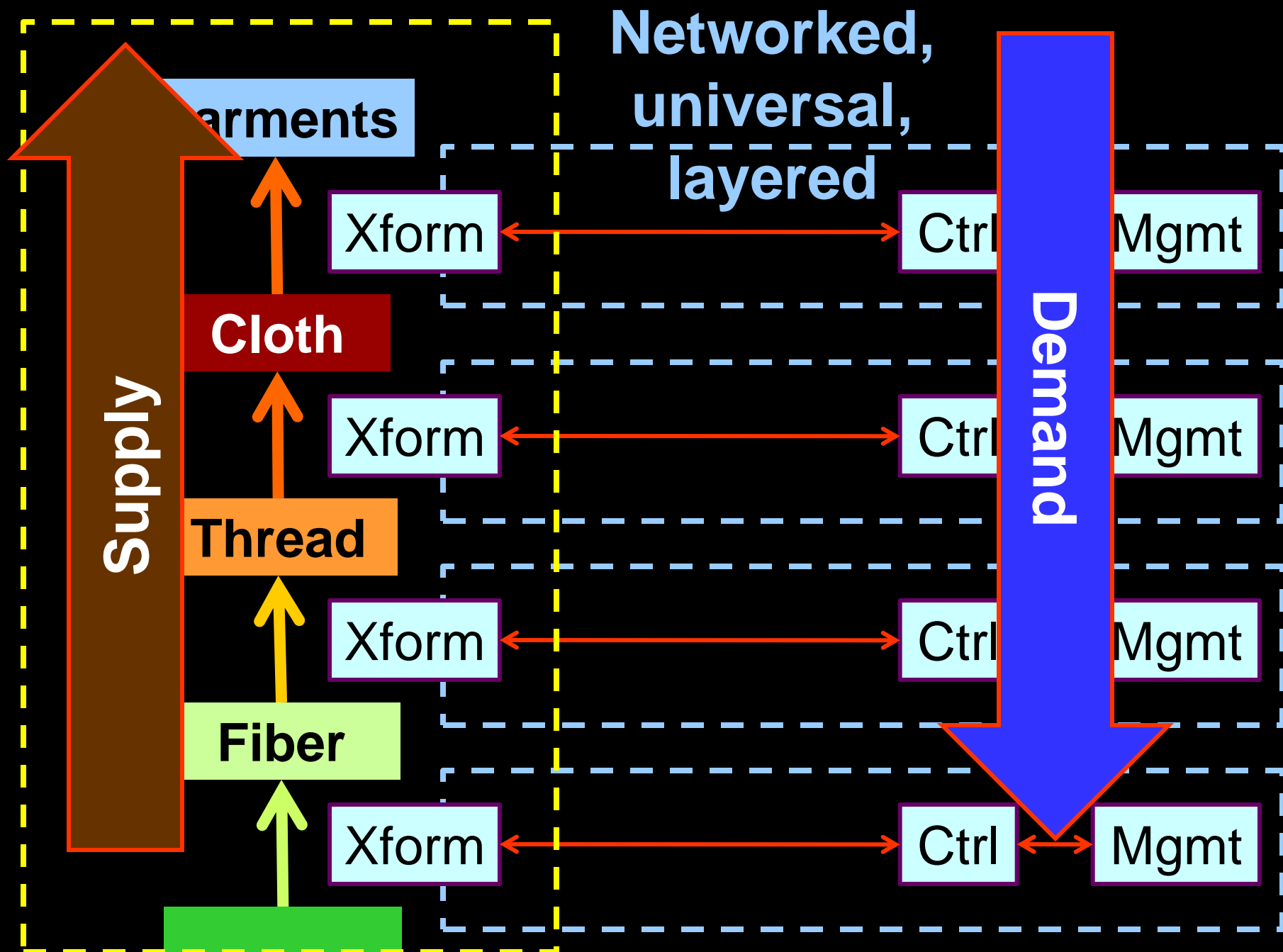
- Transfer or transform (fastest)
  - **Transform cloth to garments**
  - Depends on demand and supply
- Control (middle)
  - Schedule/MUX resources in time and space
  - Flow and error control
- Management (slowest)
  - **What** resources are available?
  - **Where** are they?
  - Cost? Risk? etc



Universal  
functions?



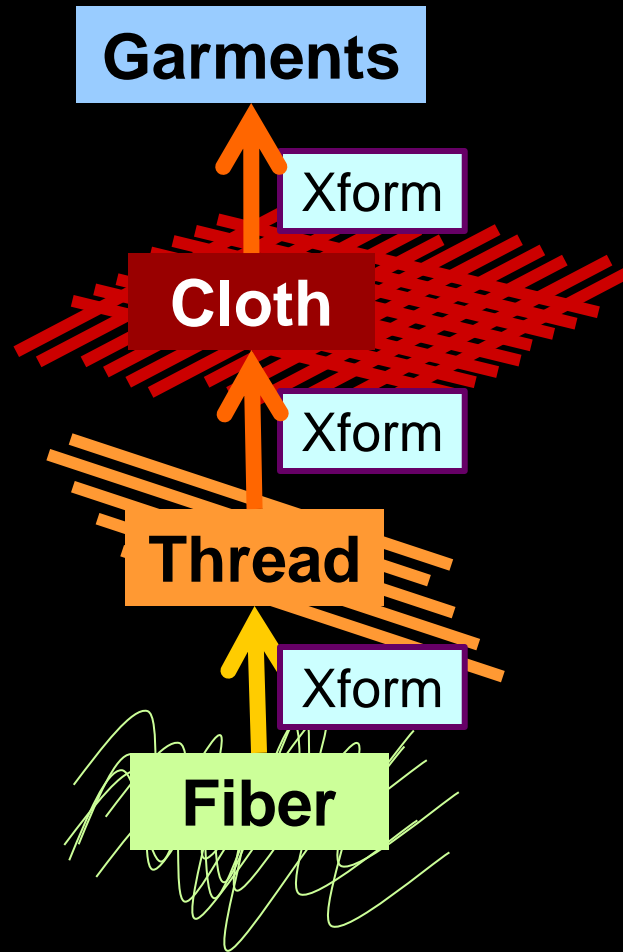




# Universal strategies?

Even though garments seem analog/continuous

Garments have limited access to threads and fibers



quantization  
for robustness

constraints on  
cross-layer  
interactions

Prevents unraveling of lower layers

**Garments**

**Cloth**

**Thread**

**Fiber**

Scalable

Sustainable?



**Functionally diverse garments**

**Diverse fabric**

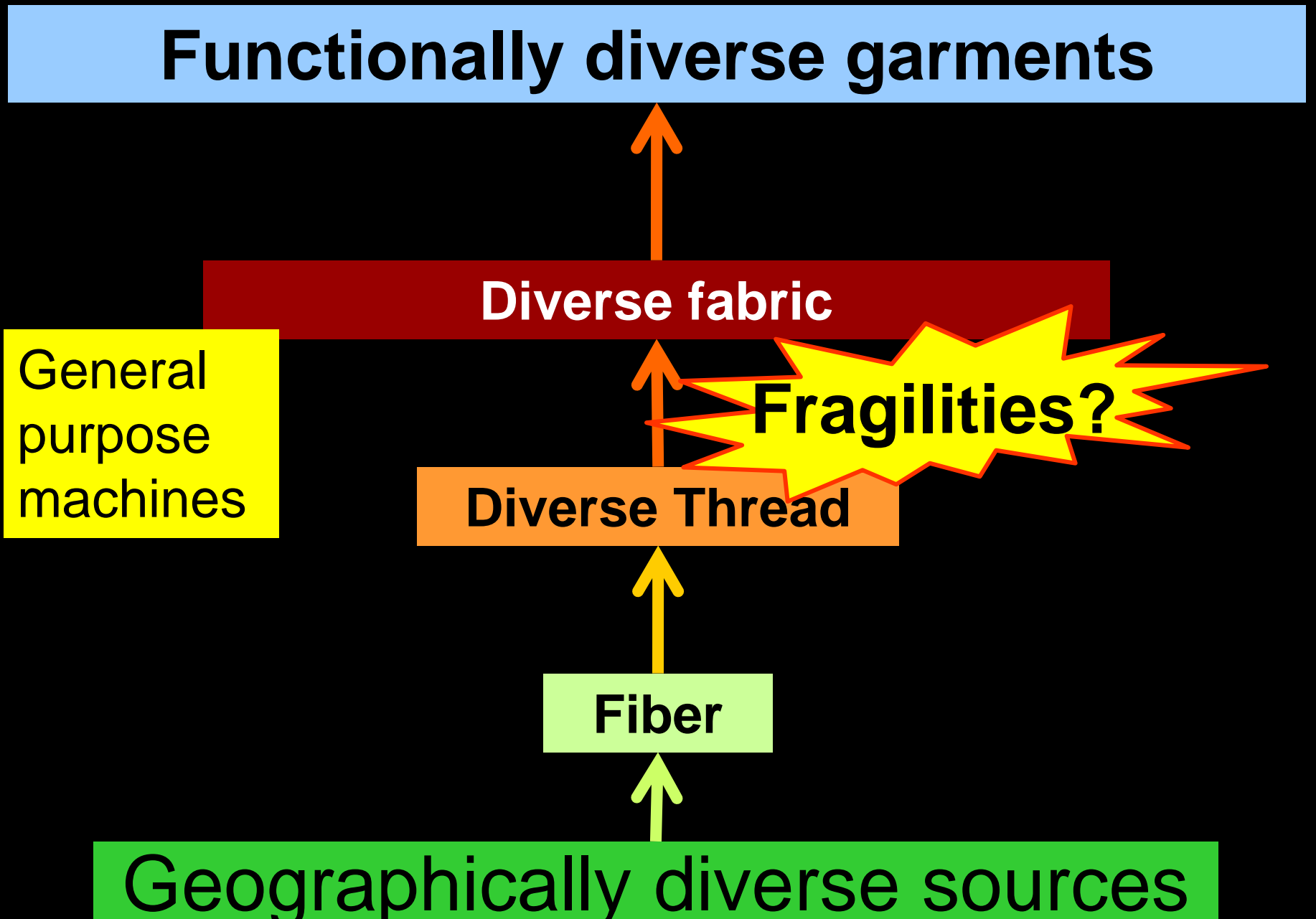
General  
purpose  
machines

**Fragilities?**

**Diverse Thread**

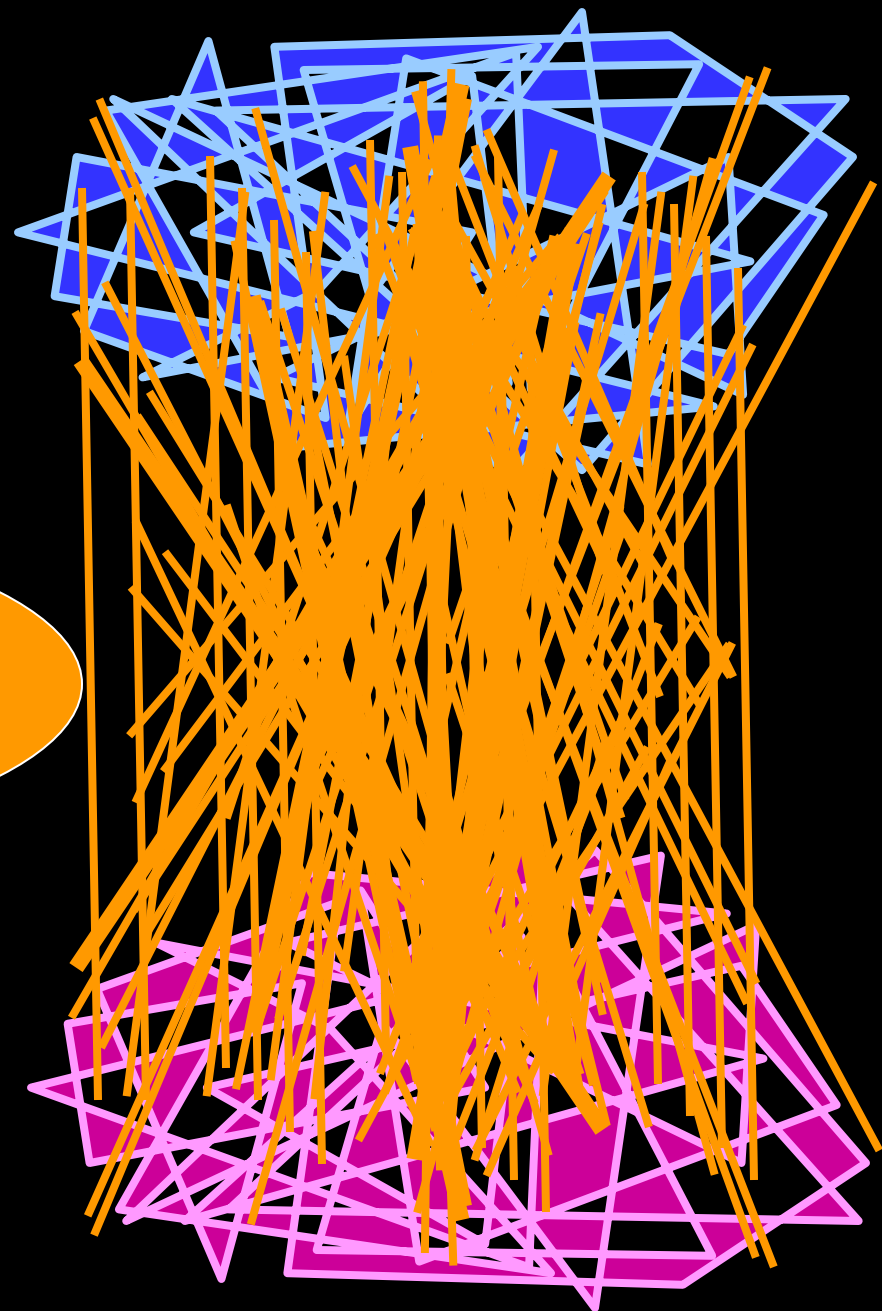
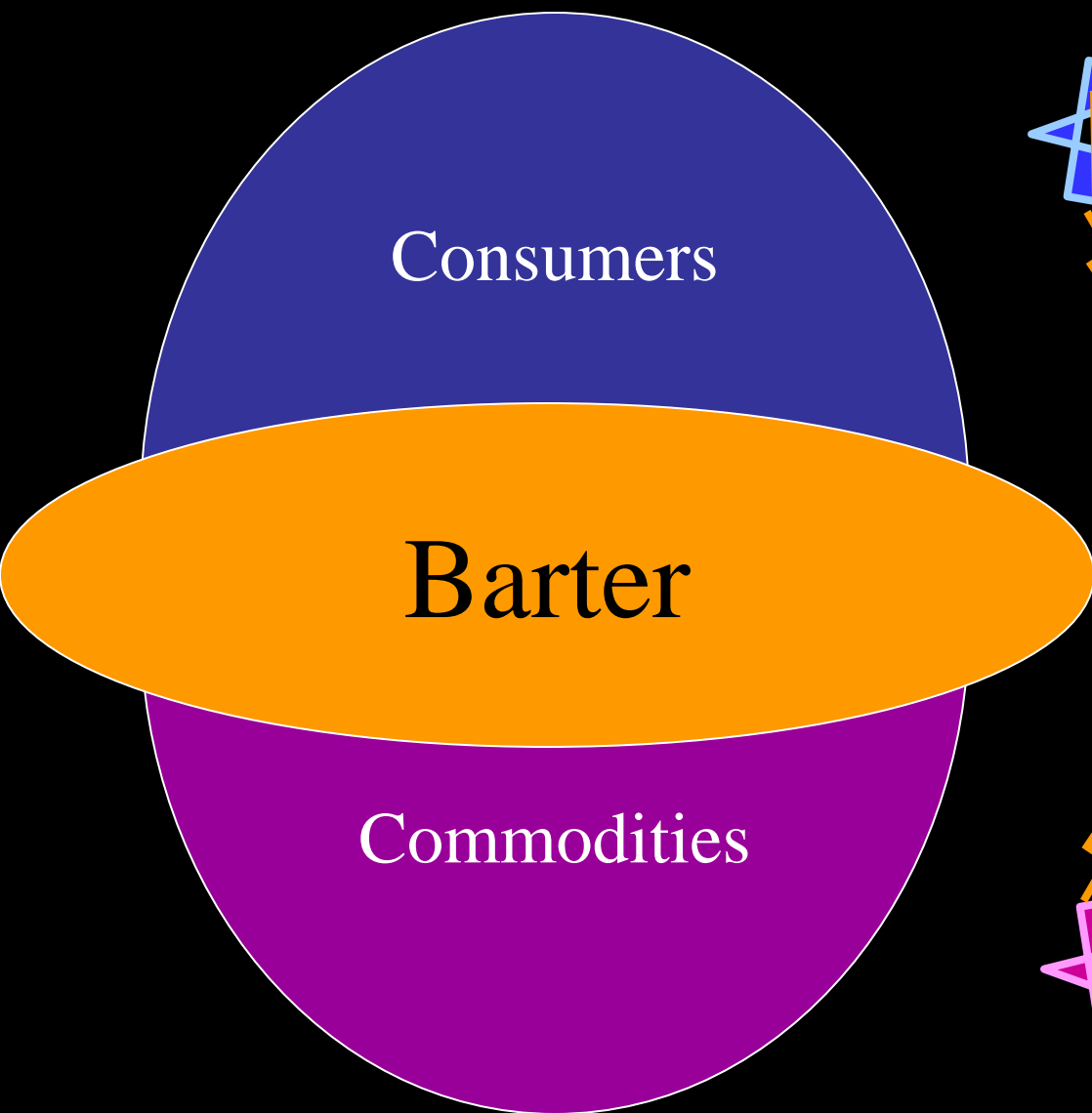
**Fiber**

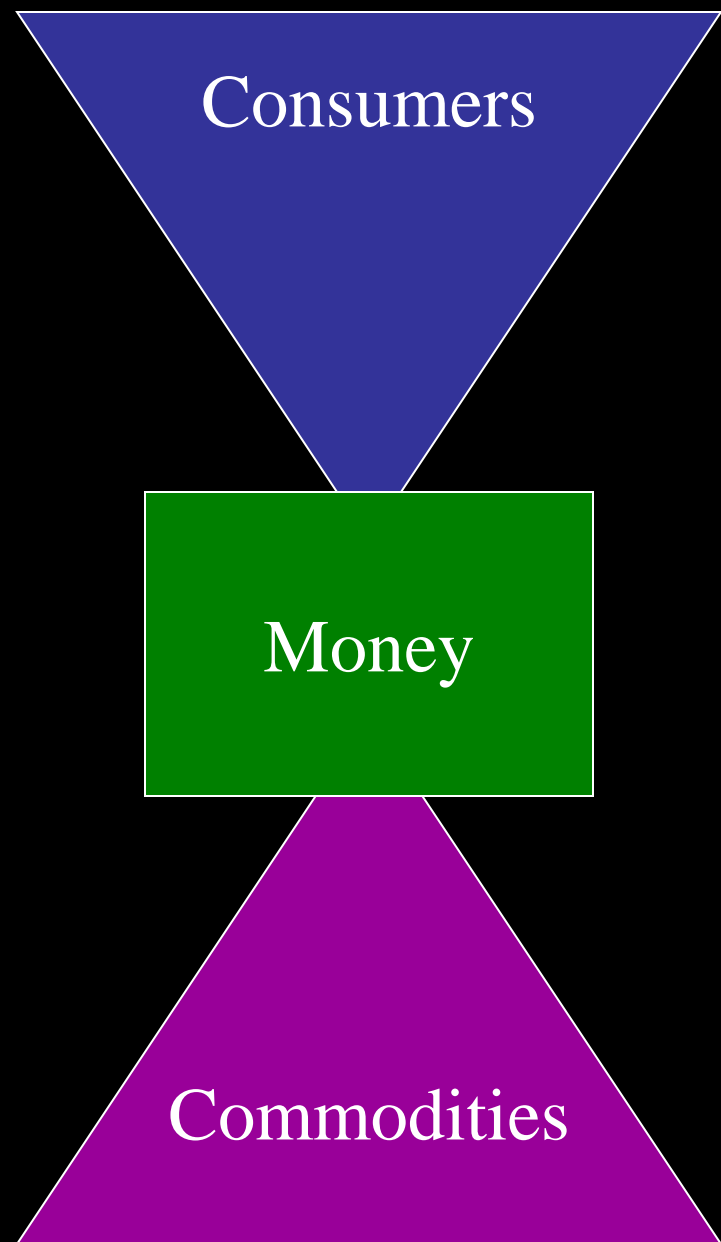
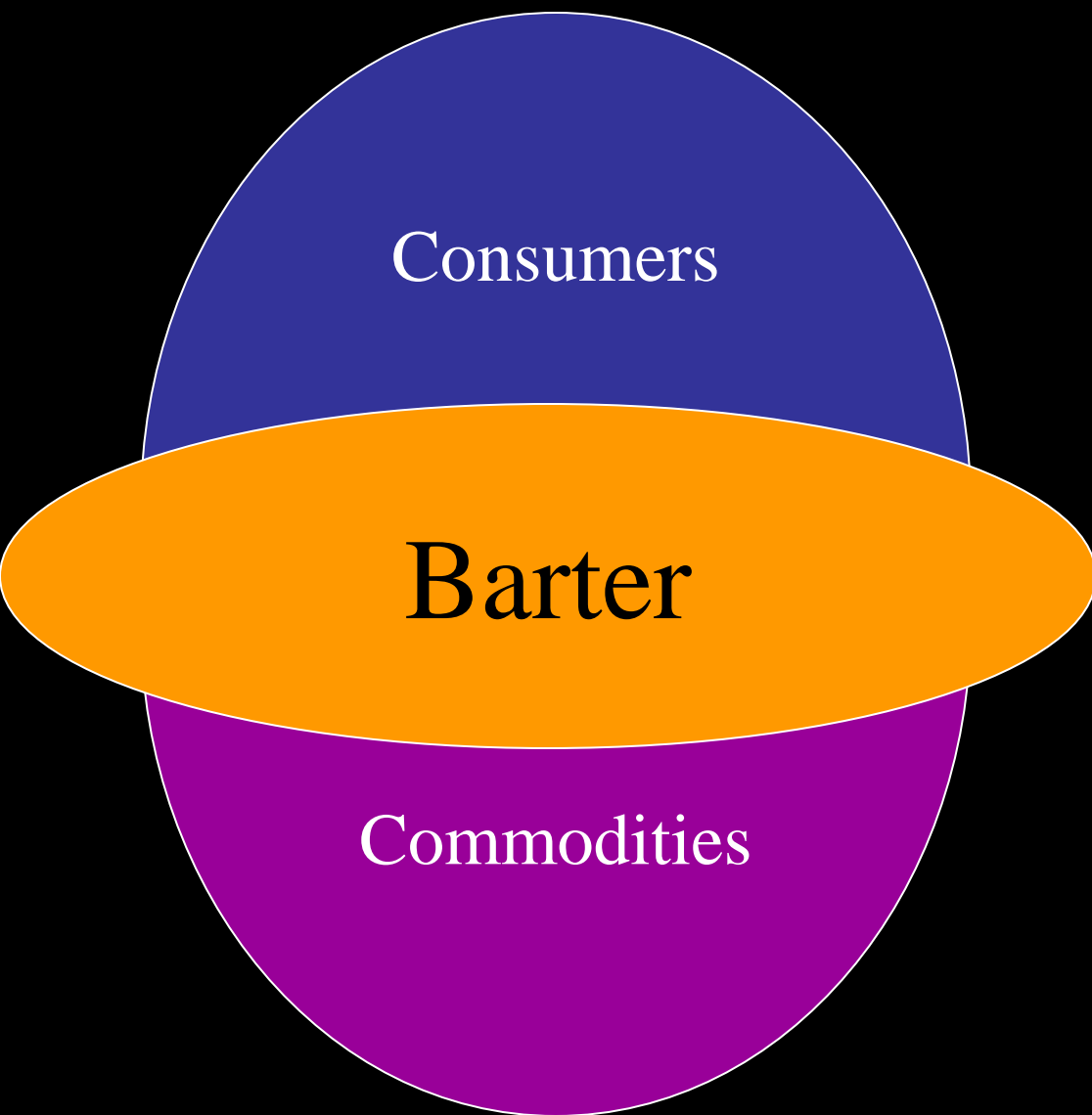
**Geographically diverse sources**

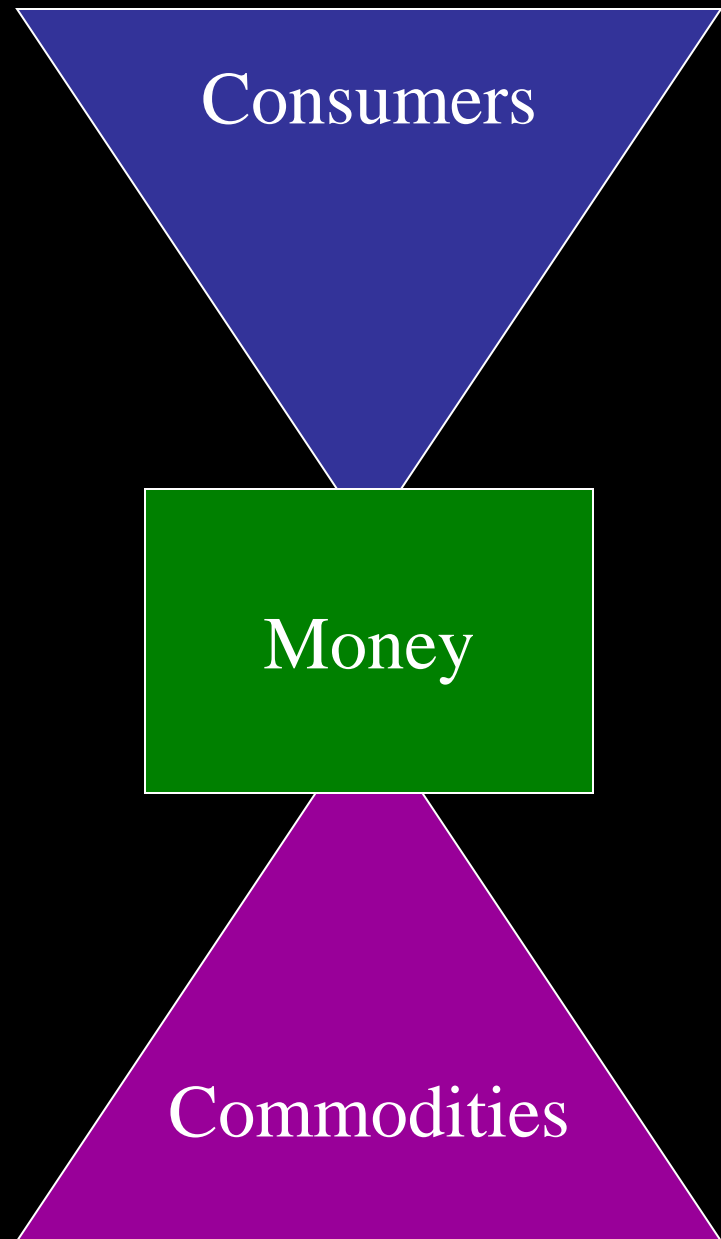
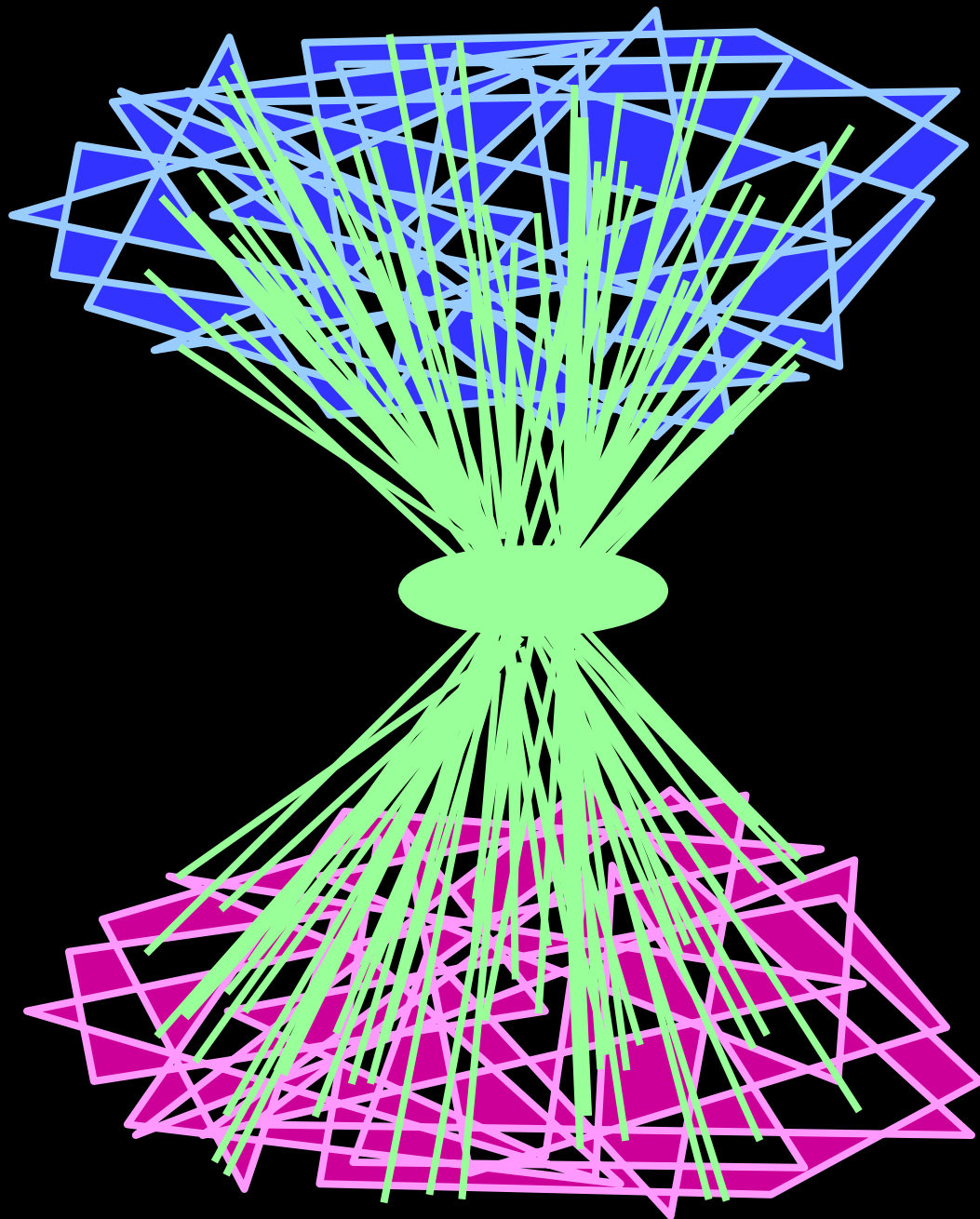




Money

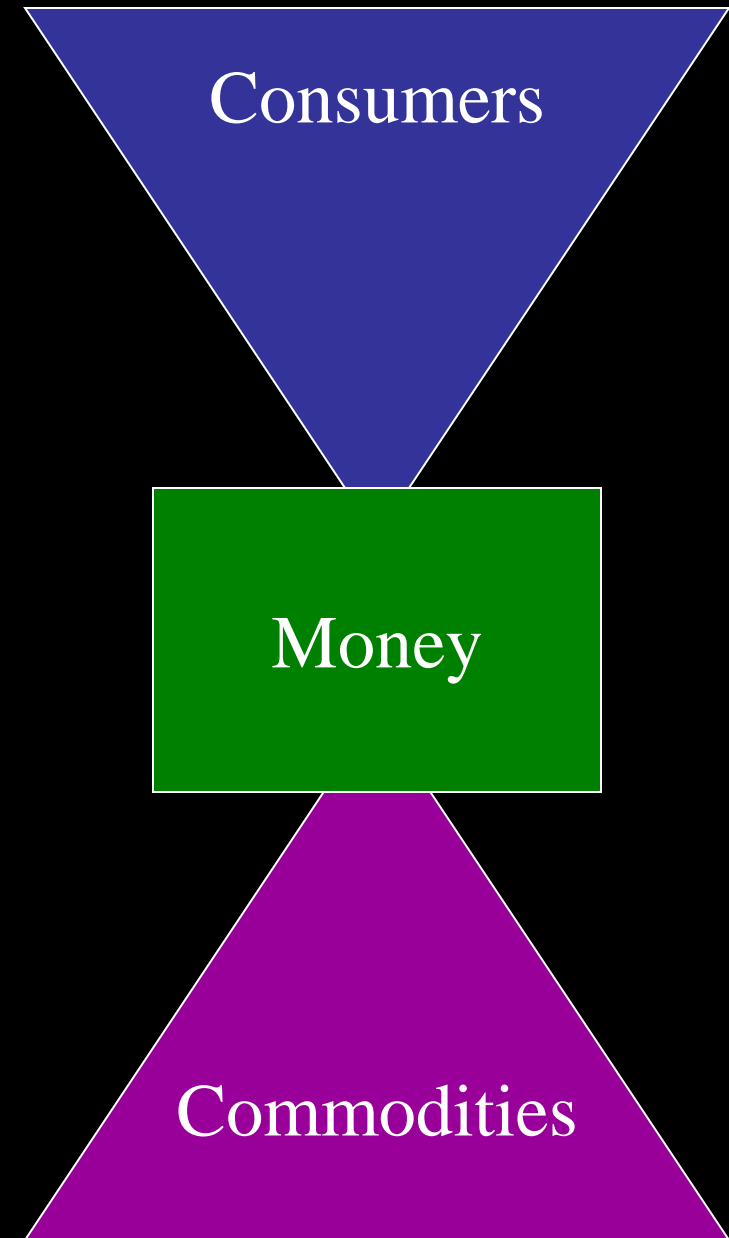




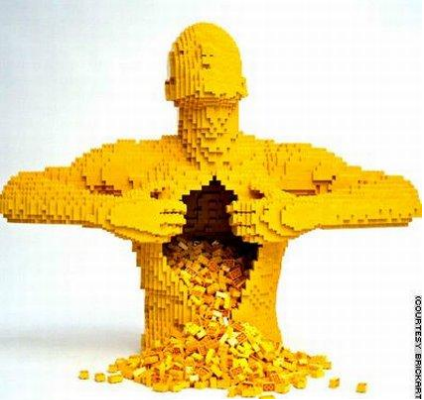


# New fragilities

- Theft, counterfeiting, fraud, and “creative accounting” are now possible
- The beginning of a growing complexity-fragility spiral
- Complex legal infrastructure
- Law, banking, finance, Ponzi schemes, derivatives, credit default swaps, ...



# Lego hourglass



Diverse  
toys

Universal  
Control

Diverse  
instructions



**control**



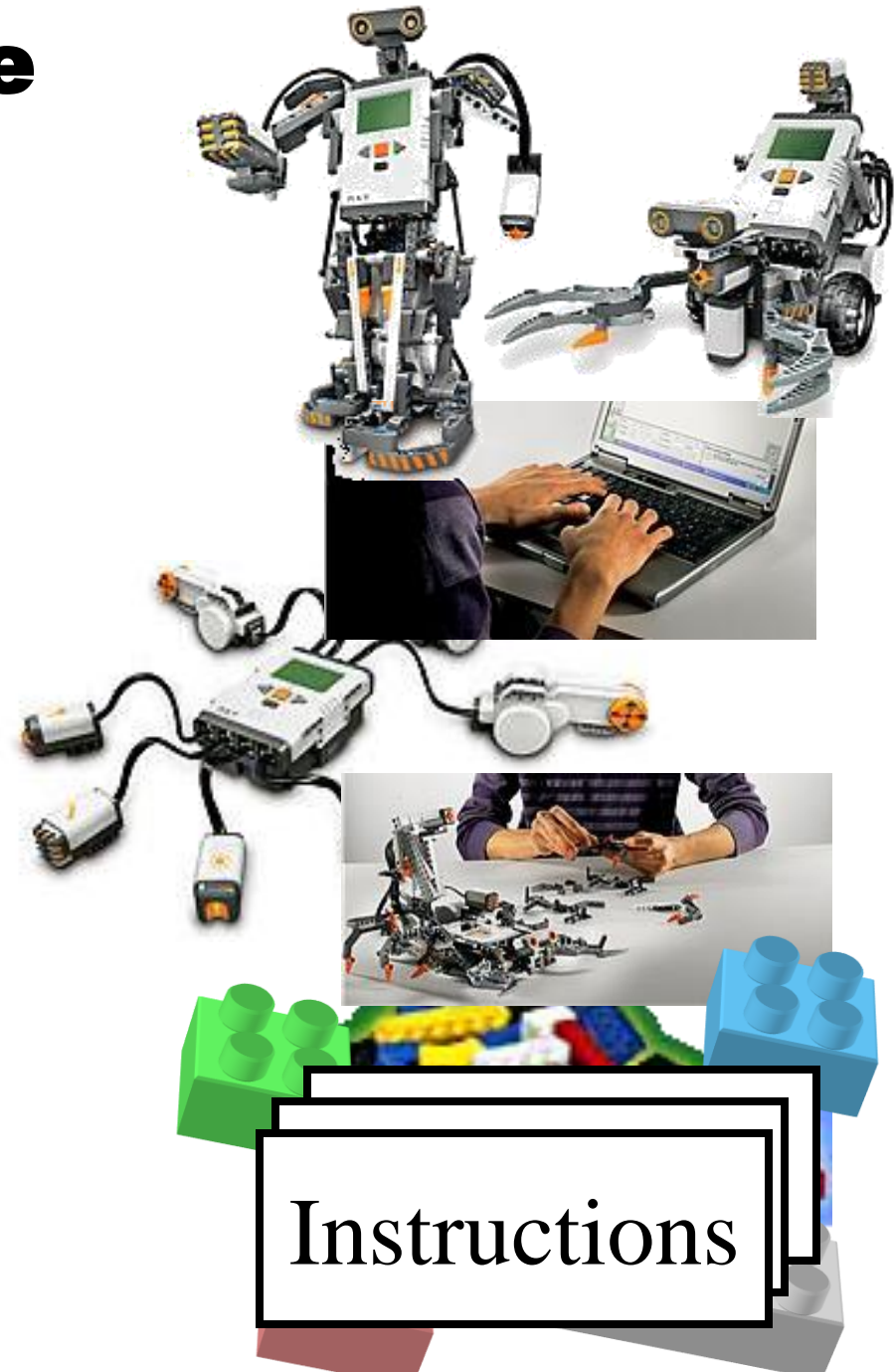
**assembly**



# Robust yet fragile

Extremes of

- Robust yet fragile
- Simplicity and complexity
- Constrained and flexible
- Frozen and evolvable
- Digital and analog
- Diverse and conserved



# Lego *system* requirements

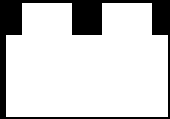
	Alternative designs?			
Performance				
Trauma				
Allowed connections				
Reuse				
Evolvable parts				
Evolvable systems				
Labor cost				
Parts cost				



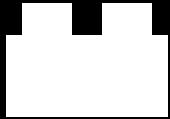
# Alternatives



No interface. Simple blocks.



Standard interface. (Wild type.)



Glue



Add glue to hold the parts together.



Injection mold the whole toy from scratch.

**For a  
single  
toy**



Lego hourglass

**Complexity**

**control**



**assembly**



**Instructions**



**Analog behavior**  
Kinematics  
Dynamics



**Digital description**  
Control  
Assembly

**control**



Instructions

# Toy *system*

Huge variety  
of toys

# Lego hourglass



Standardized mechanisms  
Highly conserved

**control**



**assembly**



Huge variety  
of instructions



Instructions

# Lego hourglass

Huge variety  
of toys



control



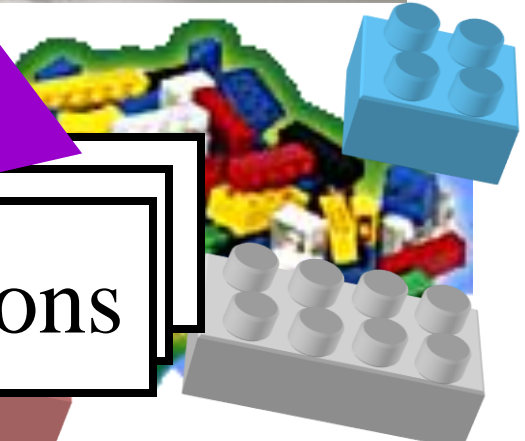
assembly



Large (<< huge)  
Variety of parts

Huge variety  
of instructions

Instructions



Reaction

# Robust yet fragile

**Flow/erro**

Carriers

## Extremes of

- Robust yet fragile
- Unity and diversity
- Simplicity and complexity
- Constrained and flexible
- Frozen and evolvable
- Digital and analog

**Flow/**

RNA

**Flow/erro**

DNA level

Instructions





Lessons from Lego:

- Infinitely ***diverse*** toys from
- moderately diverse parts
- ***Hourglass*** organization of control
- ***Conserved*** control mechanisms
- ***Bowties*** within layers
- ***Complexity*** is overwhelmingly in conserved control parts, but
- largely hidden in ordinary operation
- Greater internal complexity means more ***robust yet fragile*** external behavior



**control**

**CONSERVED**



**assembly**

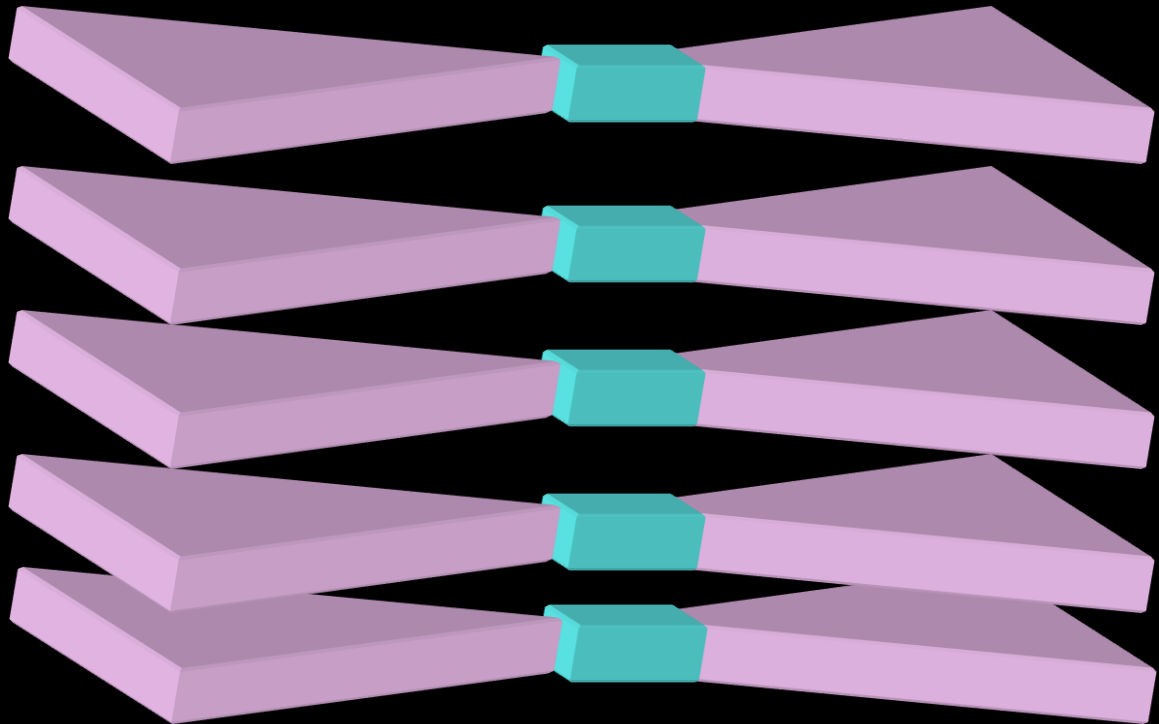
Diverse  
inputs

universal  
carriers

Diverse  
inputs

Layers of  
bowties

We'll come  
back to this  
aspect later.





# Why bowties?

- Metabolism, biosynthesis, assembly
  1. *Carriers*: Charging carriers in central metabolism
  2. *Precursors*: Biosynthesis of precursors and building blocks
  3. *Trans\**: DNA replication, transcription, and translation
- Signal transduction
  4. *2CST*: Two-component signal transduction

Variety of  
Ligands &  
Receptors

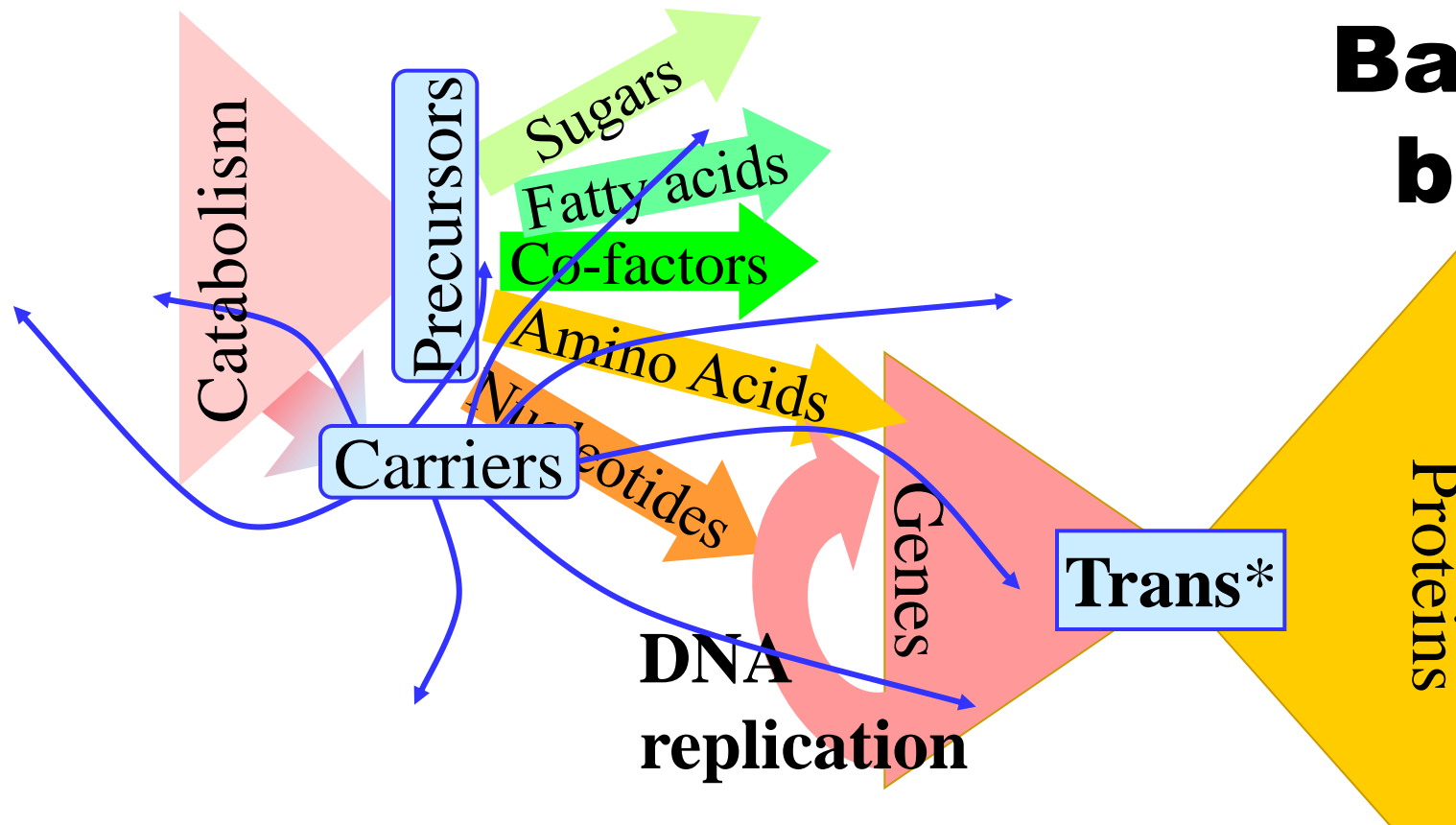
Transmitter

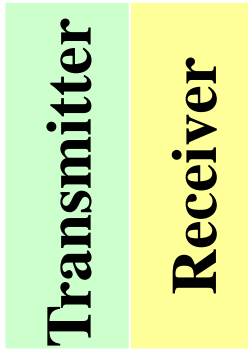
Receiver

Variety of  
responses

1. *Carriers*
2. *Precursors*
3. *Trans\**
4. *2CST*

**Bacterial  
bowties**



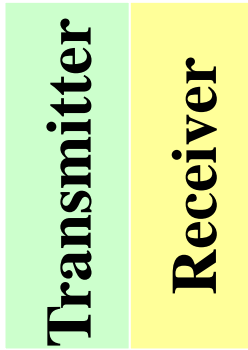


1. *Carriers*
2. *Precursors*
3. *Trans\**
4. *2CST*

Precursors

Carriers

Trans\*



# Constraints

Precursors

Carriers

**Trans\***

Variety of  
Ligands &  
Receptors

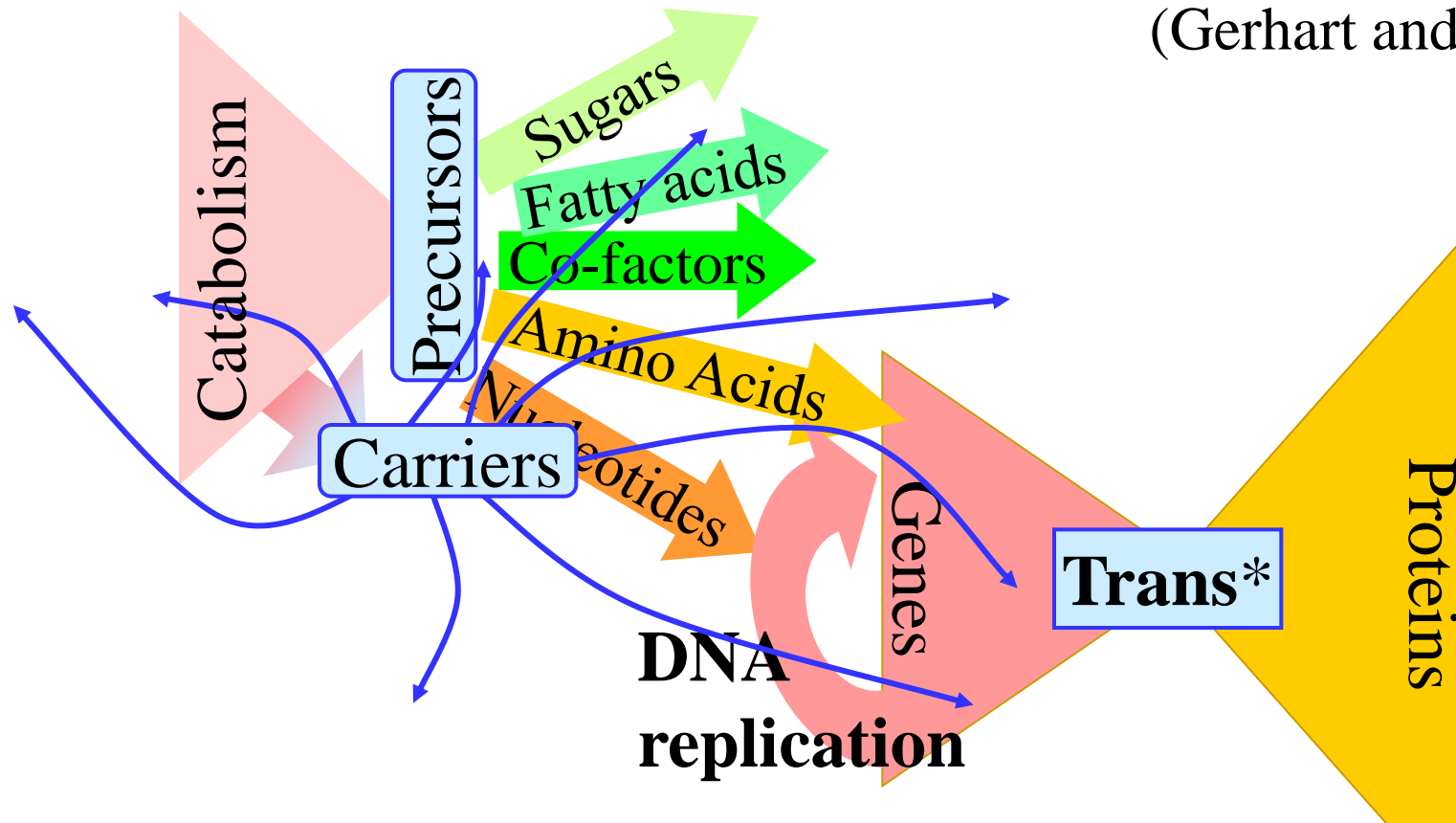
**Transmitter**

**Receiver**

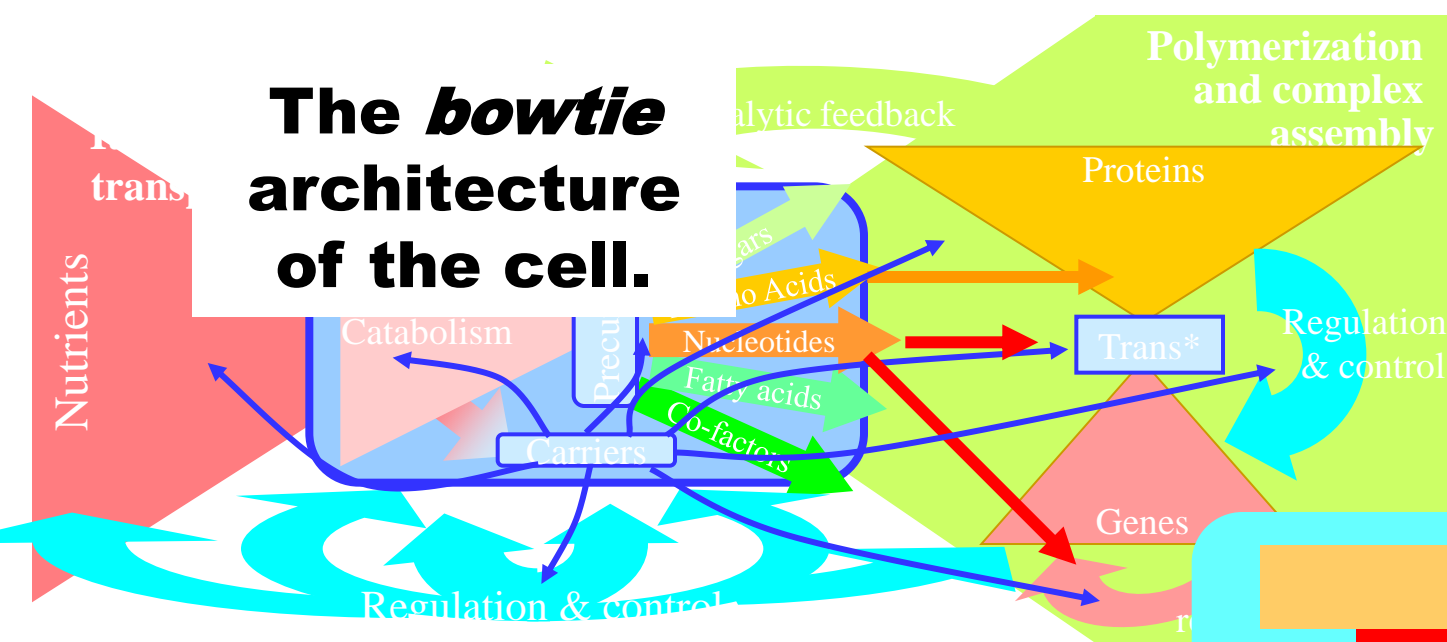
Variety of  
responses

# Constraints That Deconstrain

(Gerhart and Kirschner)

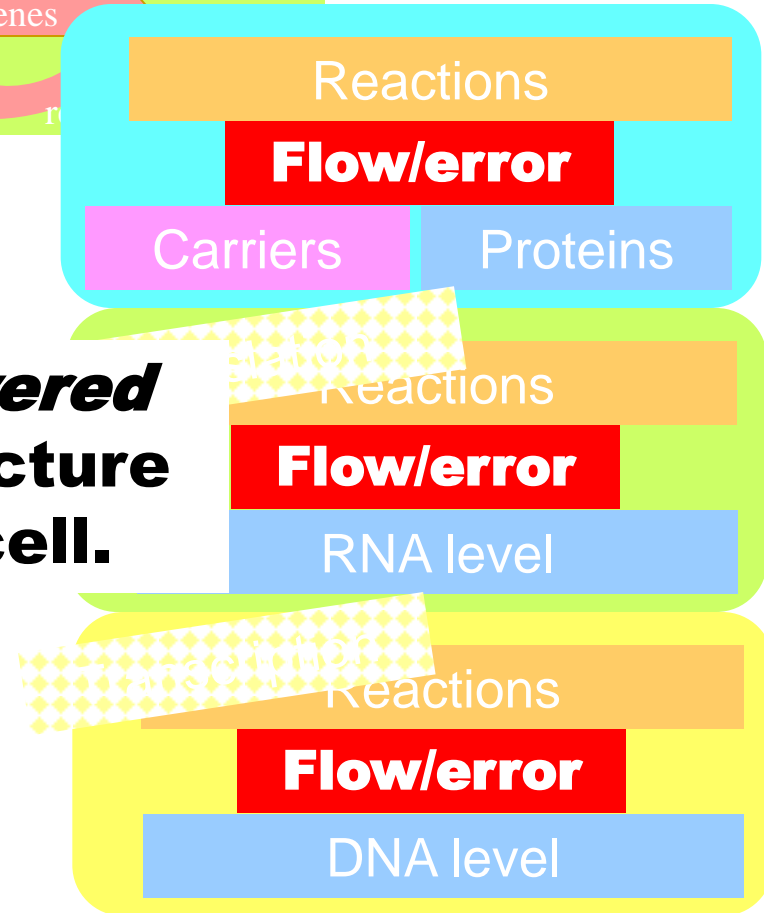


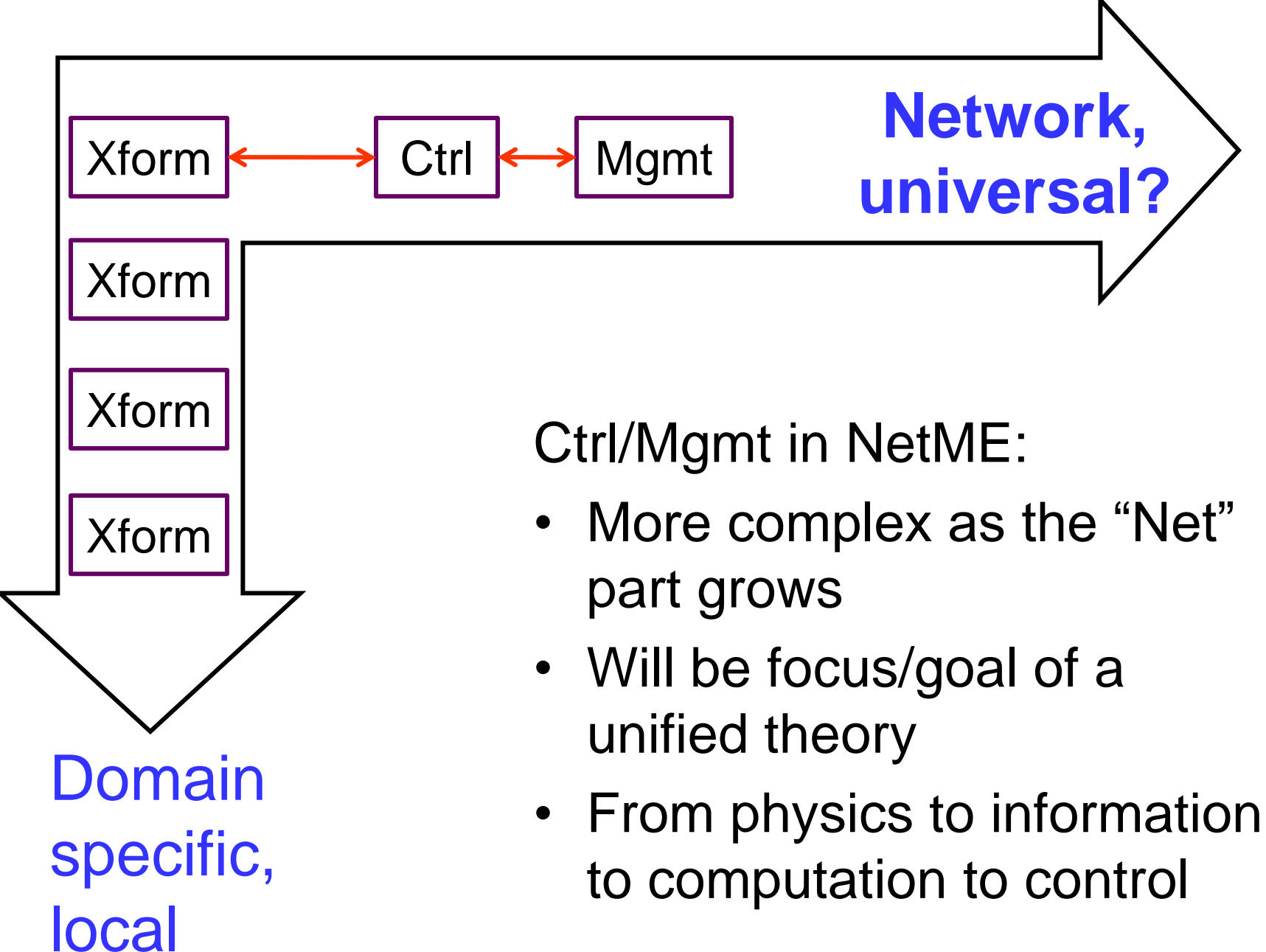
## The *bowtie* architecture of the cell.



Need a more coherent cartoon to visualize how these fit together.

## The *layered* architecture of the cell.





Reactions

**Flow/error**

Protein level

Translation

**Flow/error**

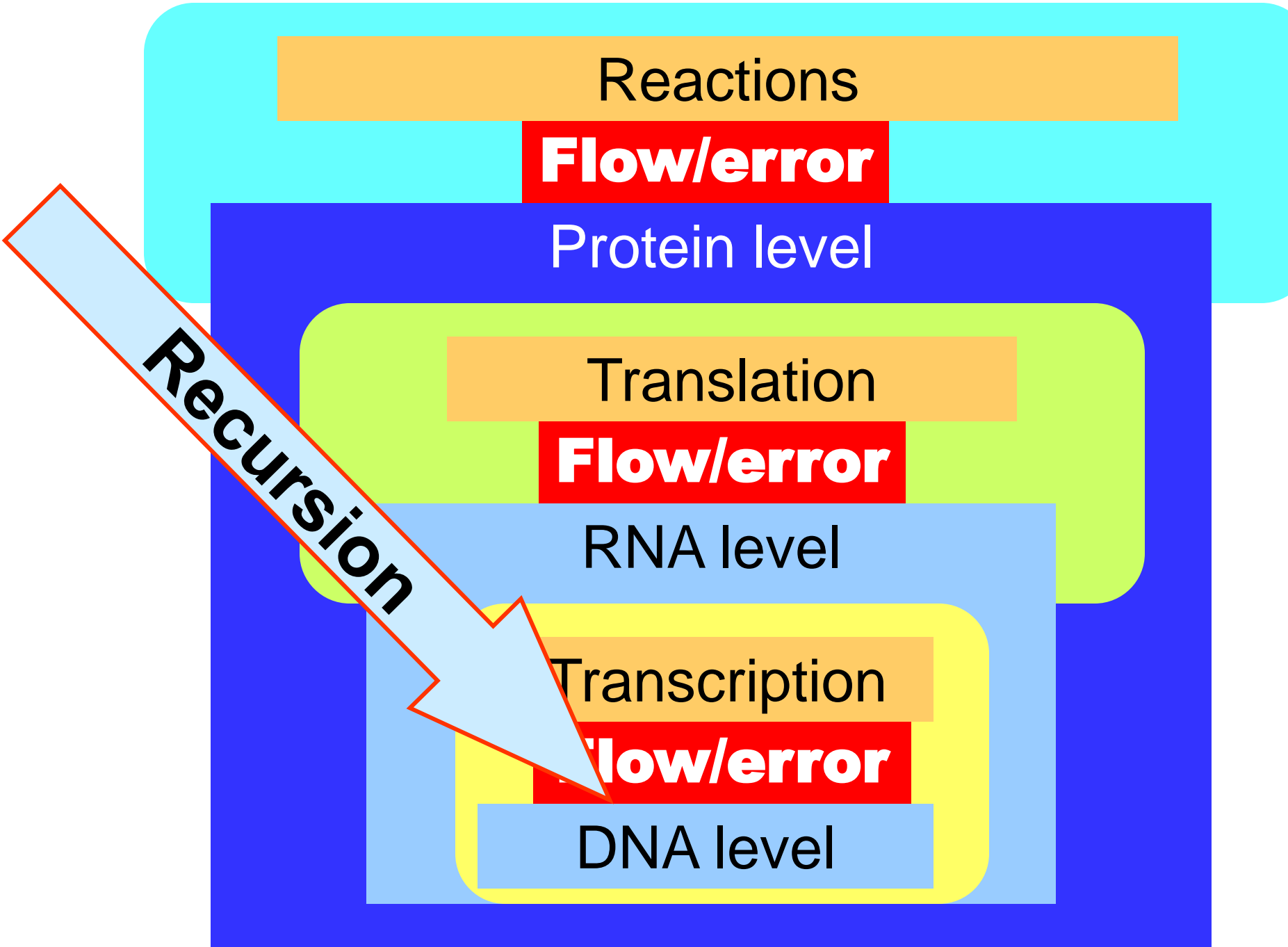
RNA level

Transcription

**Flow/error**

DNA level

Recursion





# Diverse Reactions

**Flow/error**

Protein level

Conserved  
core  
control

Reactions

Translation  
RNA level

Transcription

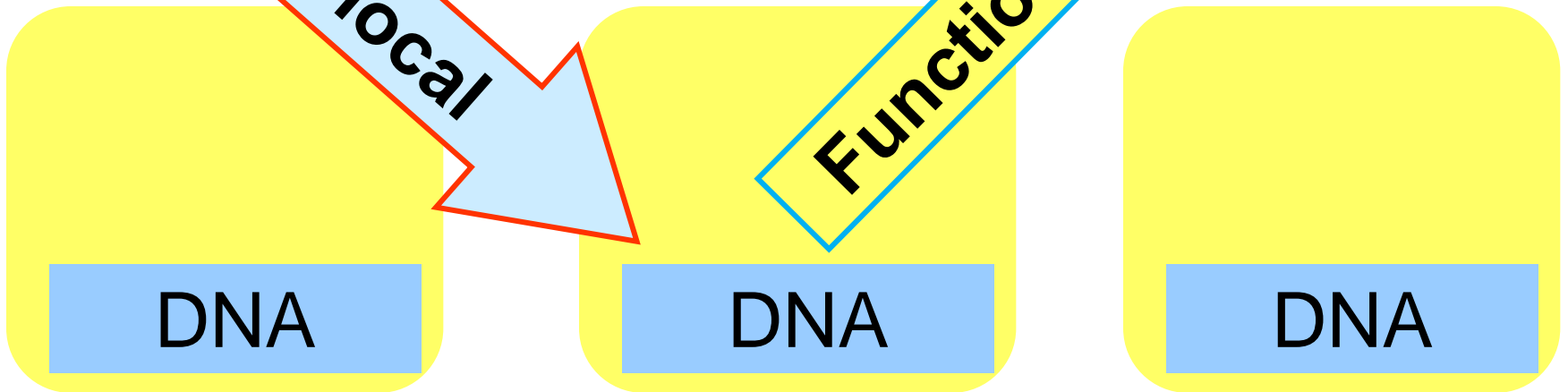
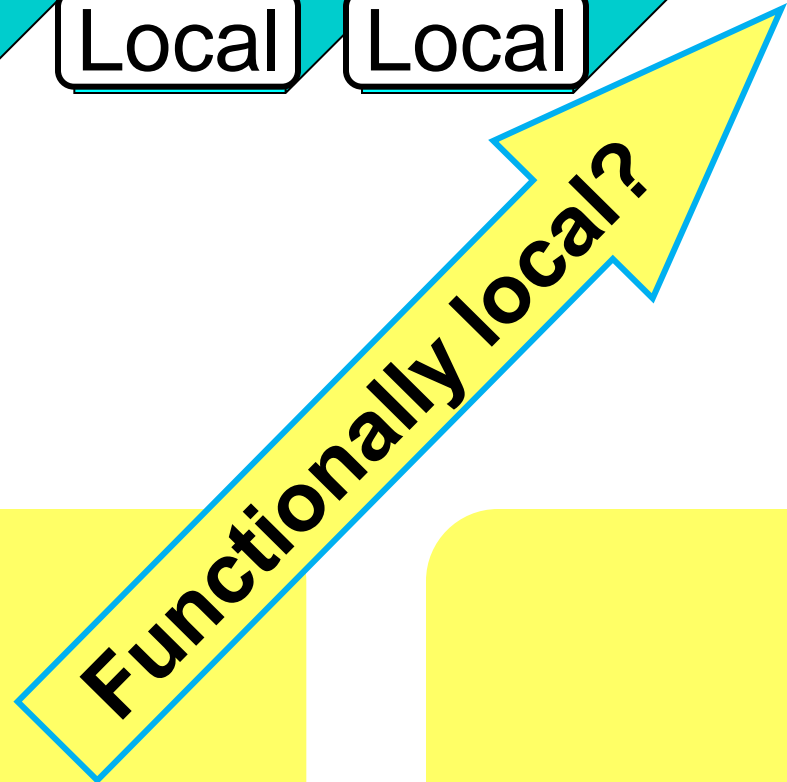
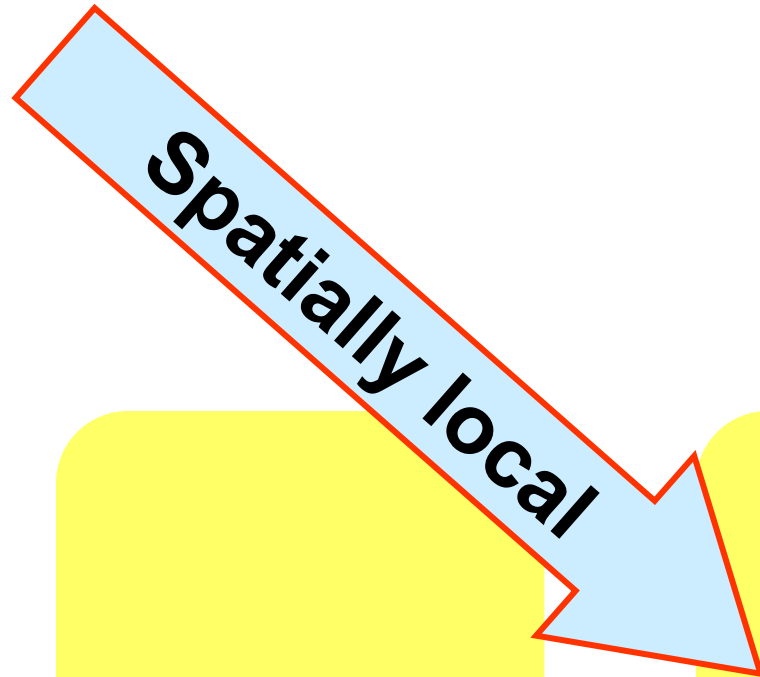
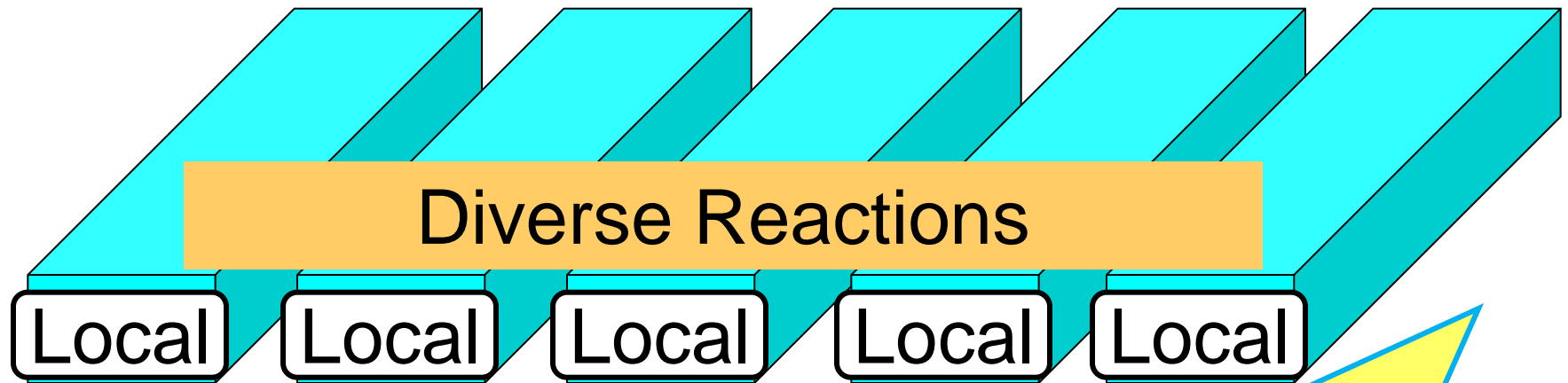
**Flow/error**

DNA

DNA

DNA

# Diverse Genomes

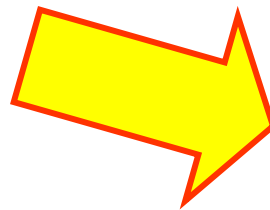


Diverse Genomes

Reactions

**Flow/err**

Protein level



Reactions

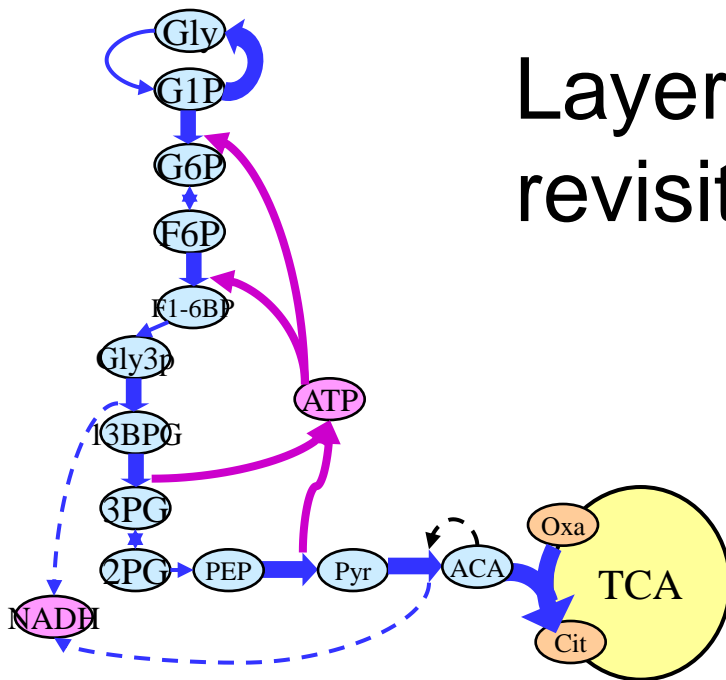
**Flow/err**

Carriers

Proteins

Layering  
revisited

More complete picture



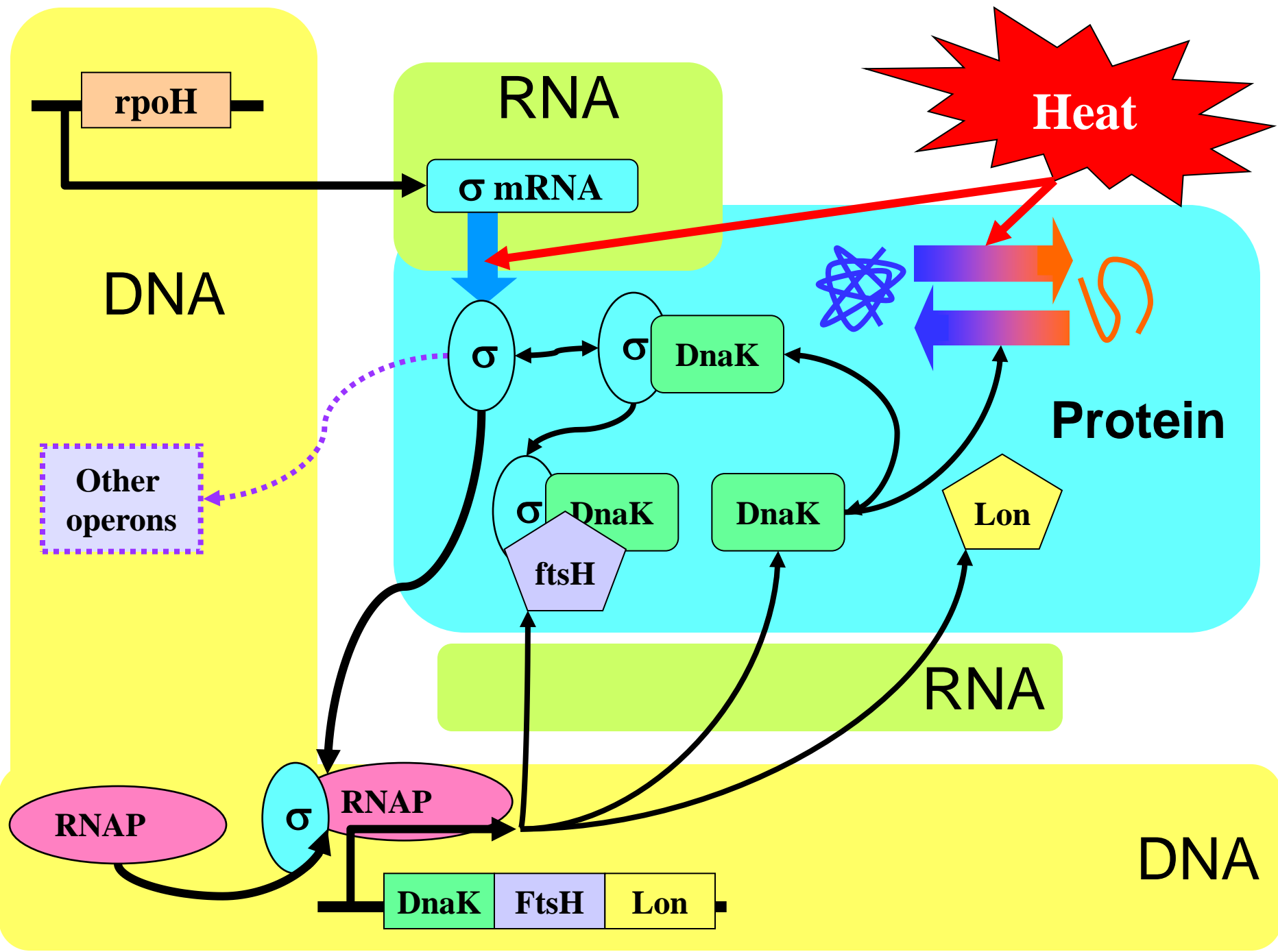
# Biology versus the Internet

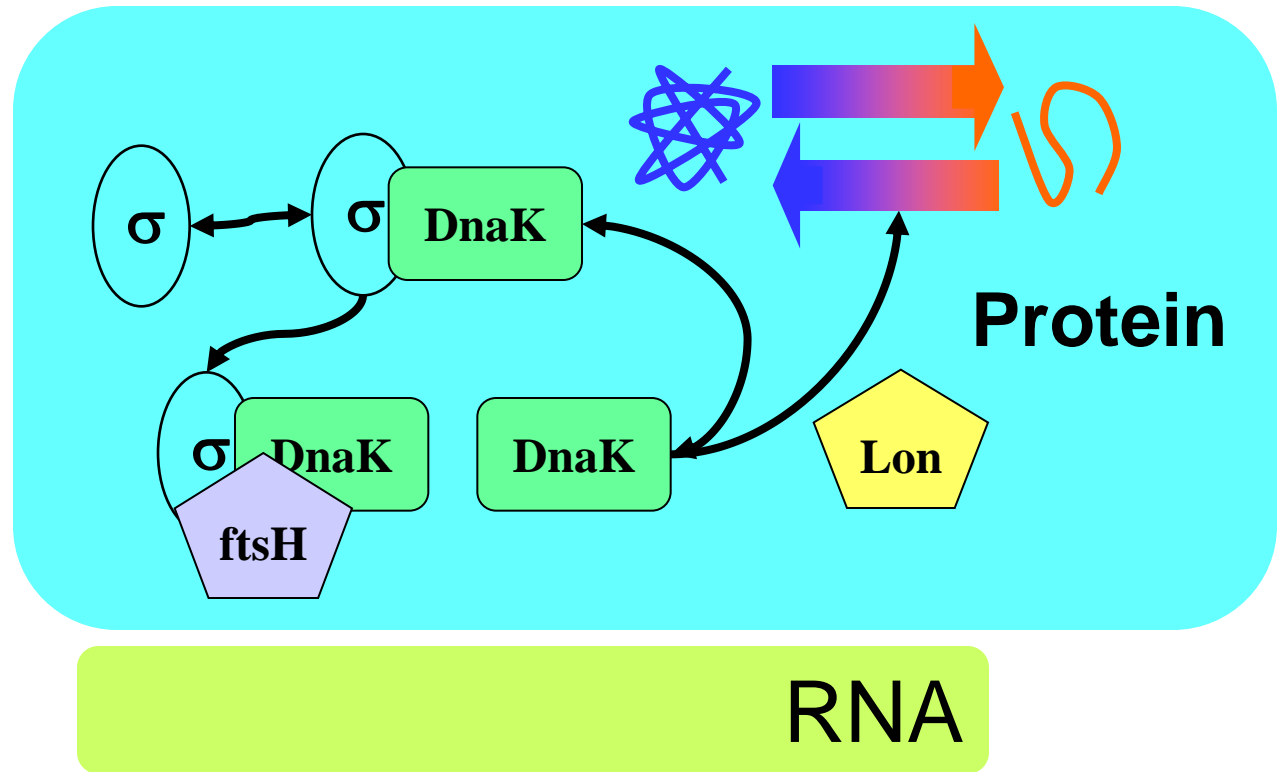
## Similarities

- Evolvable architecture
- Robust yet fragile
- **Layering, modularity**
- Hourglass with bowties
- Dynamics
- Feedback
- Distributed/decentralized
- *Not* scale-free, edge-of-chaos, self-organized criticality, etc

## Differences

- Metabolism
- Materials and energy
- **Autocatalytic feedback**
- Feedback complexity
- Development and regeneration
- >3B years of evolution



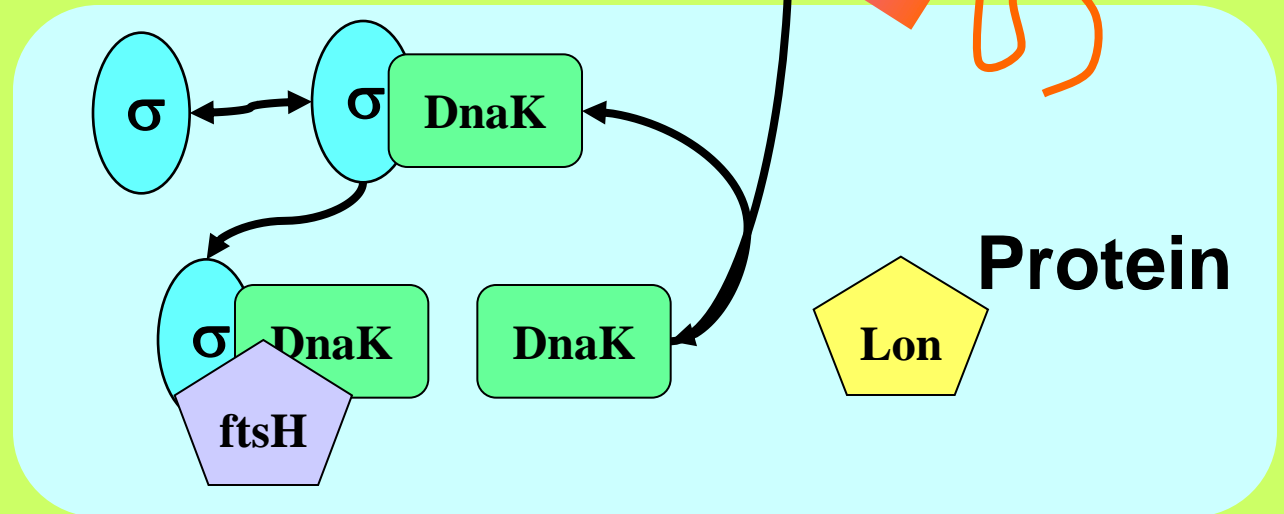


folded

All proteins

unfolded

This is all  
part of  
controlling  
protein *level*



RNA

Reactions

**Flow/error**

Protein level

Translation

**Flow/error**

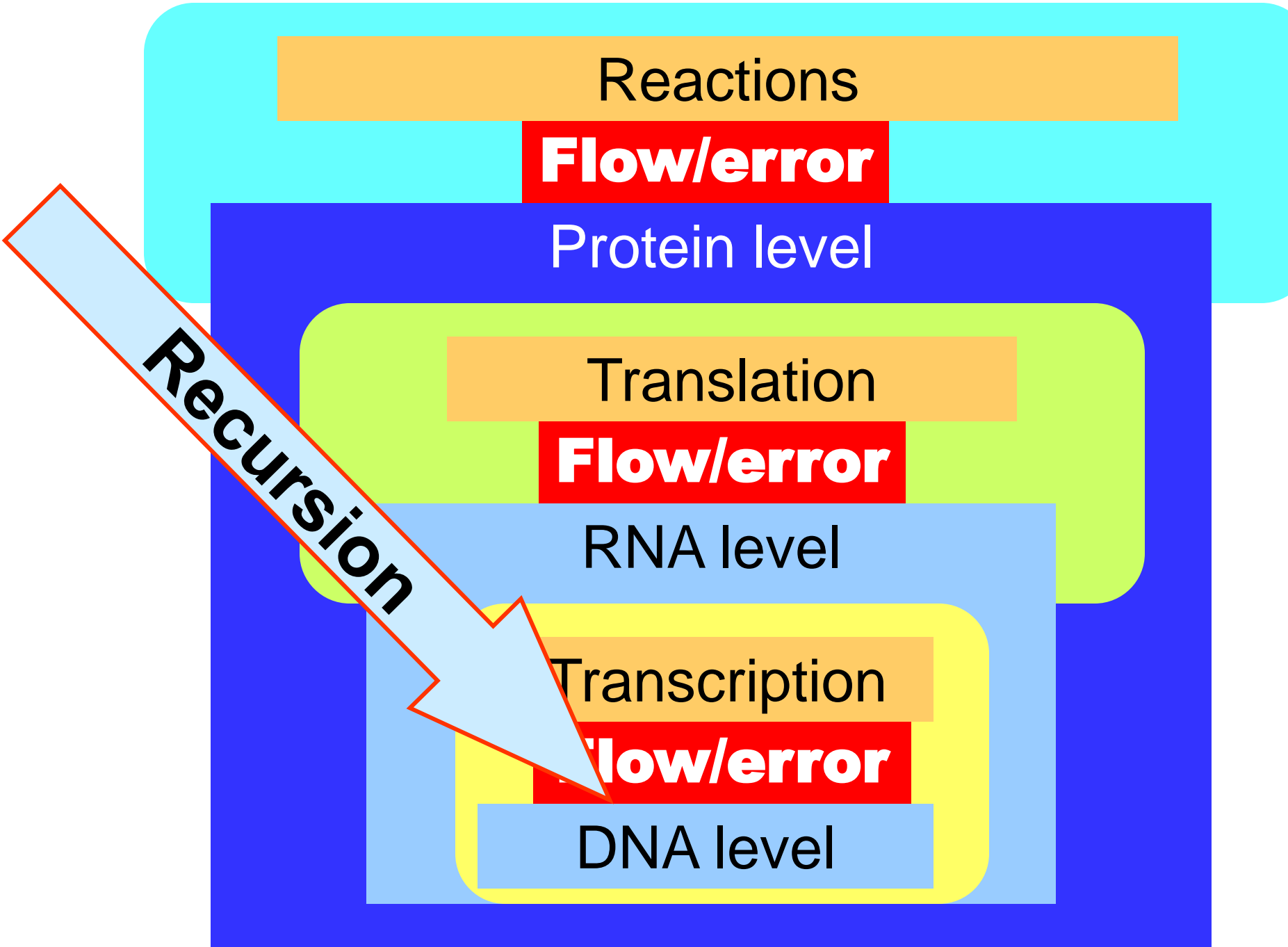
RNA level

Transcription

**Flow/error**

DNA level

Recursion





Reactions

**Flow/error**

Protein level

Translation

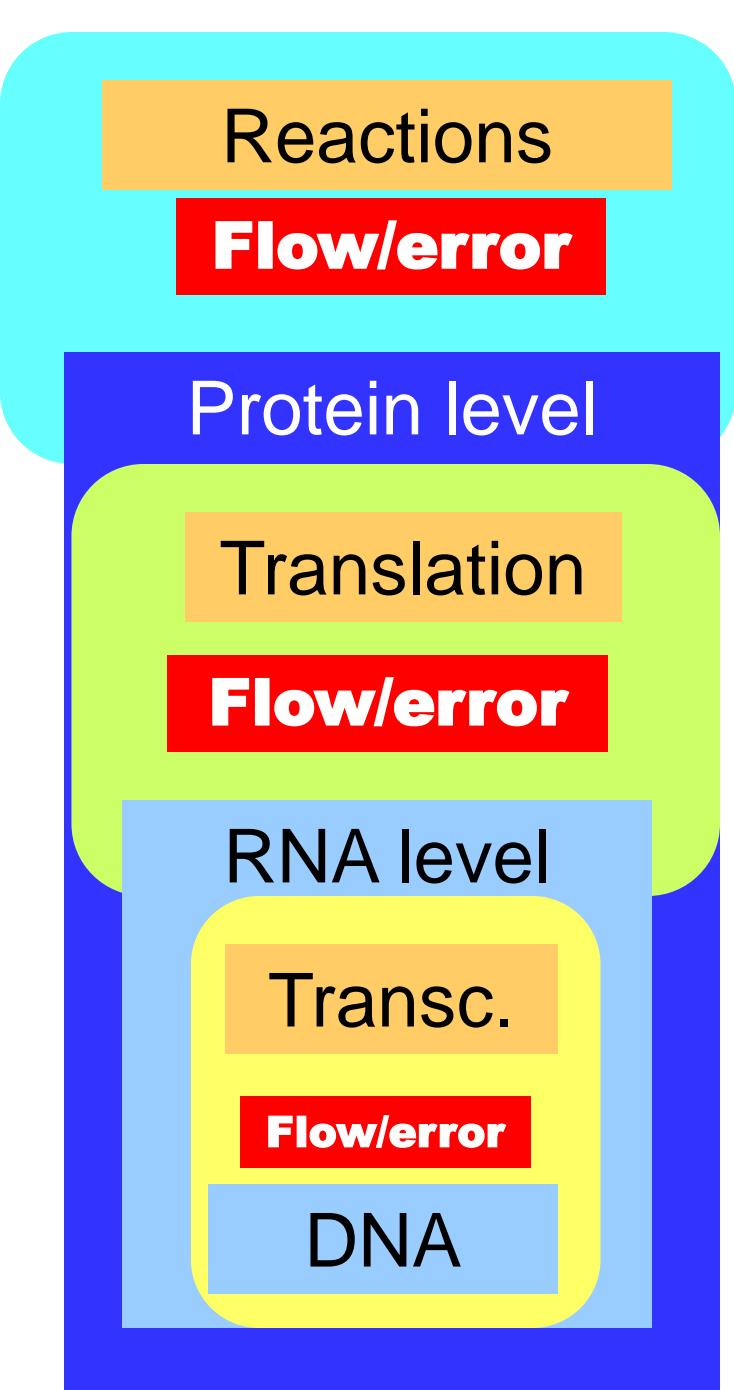
**Flow/error**

RNA level

Transc.

**Flow/error**

DNA



Reactions

**Flow/error**

Protein level

Translation

**Flow/error**

RNA level

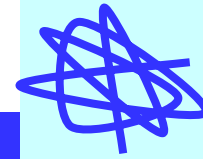
Transc.

**Flow/error**

DNA

This is all  
part of  
controlling  
protein  
*level*

folded



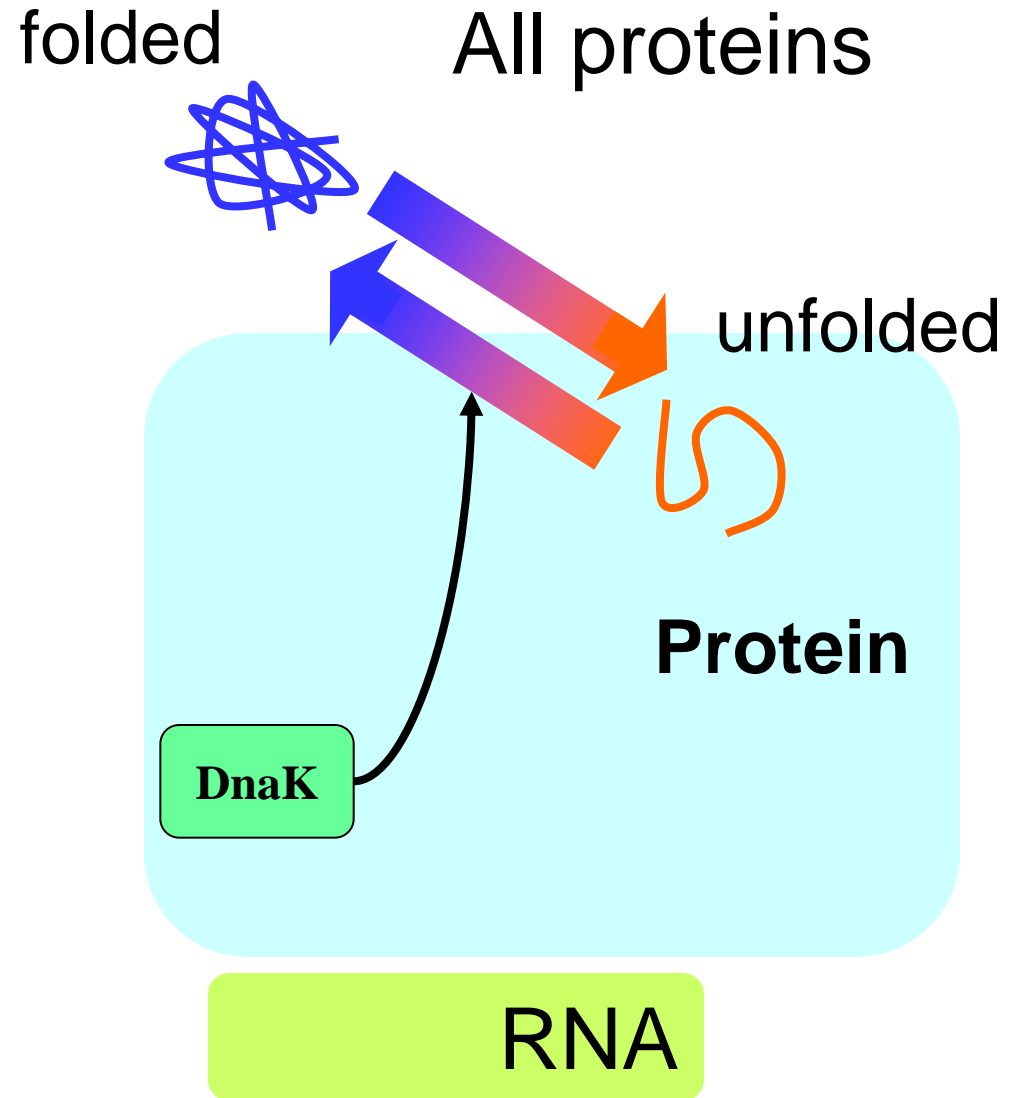
unfolded

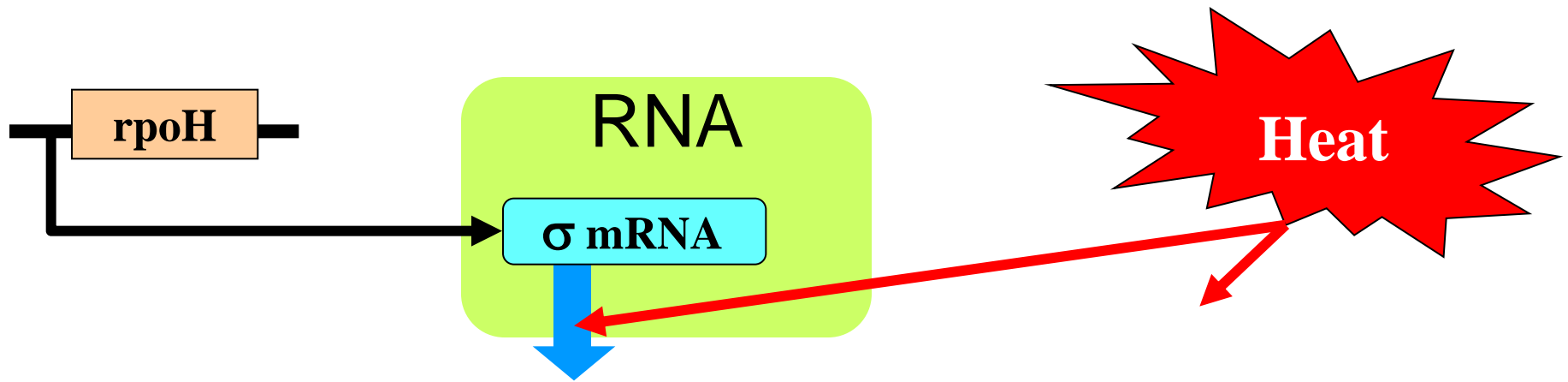


DnaK

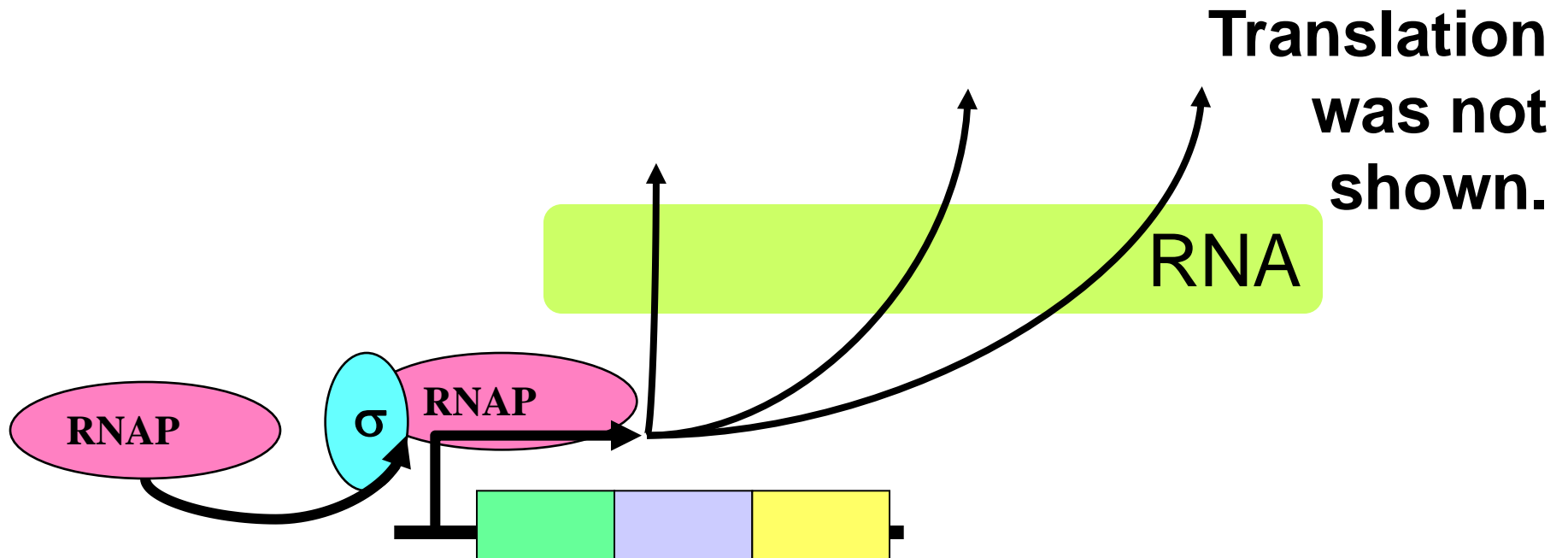
RNA

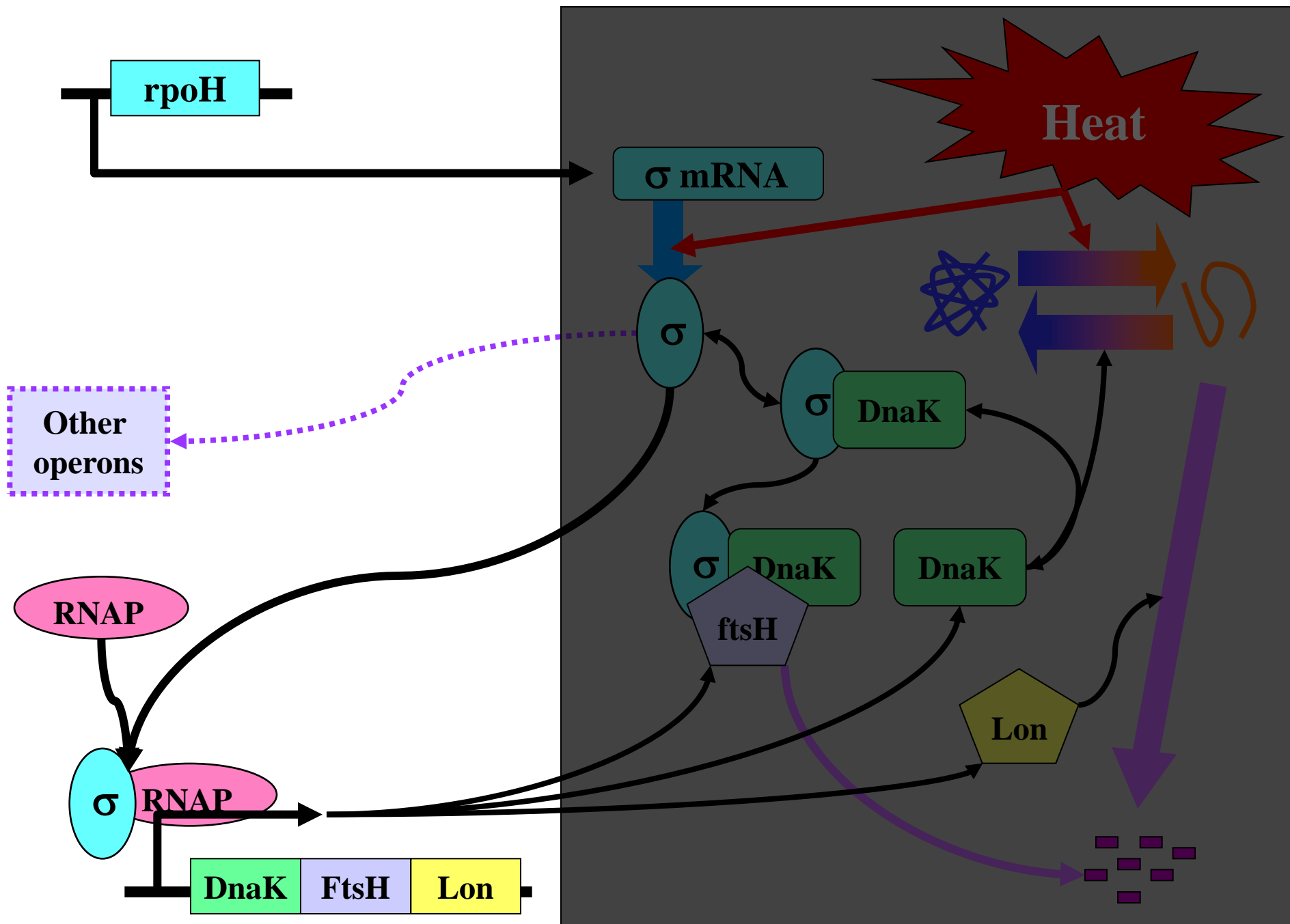
This is all  
part of  
controlling  
protein level

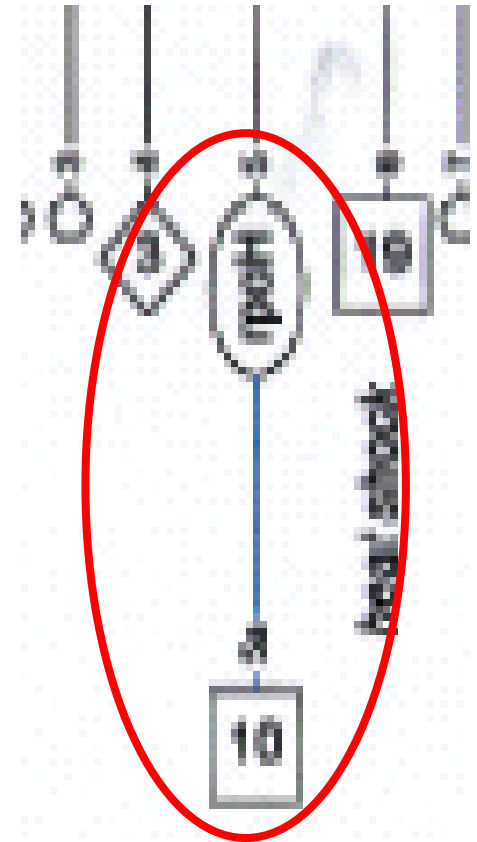
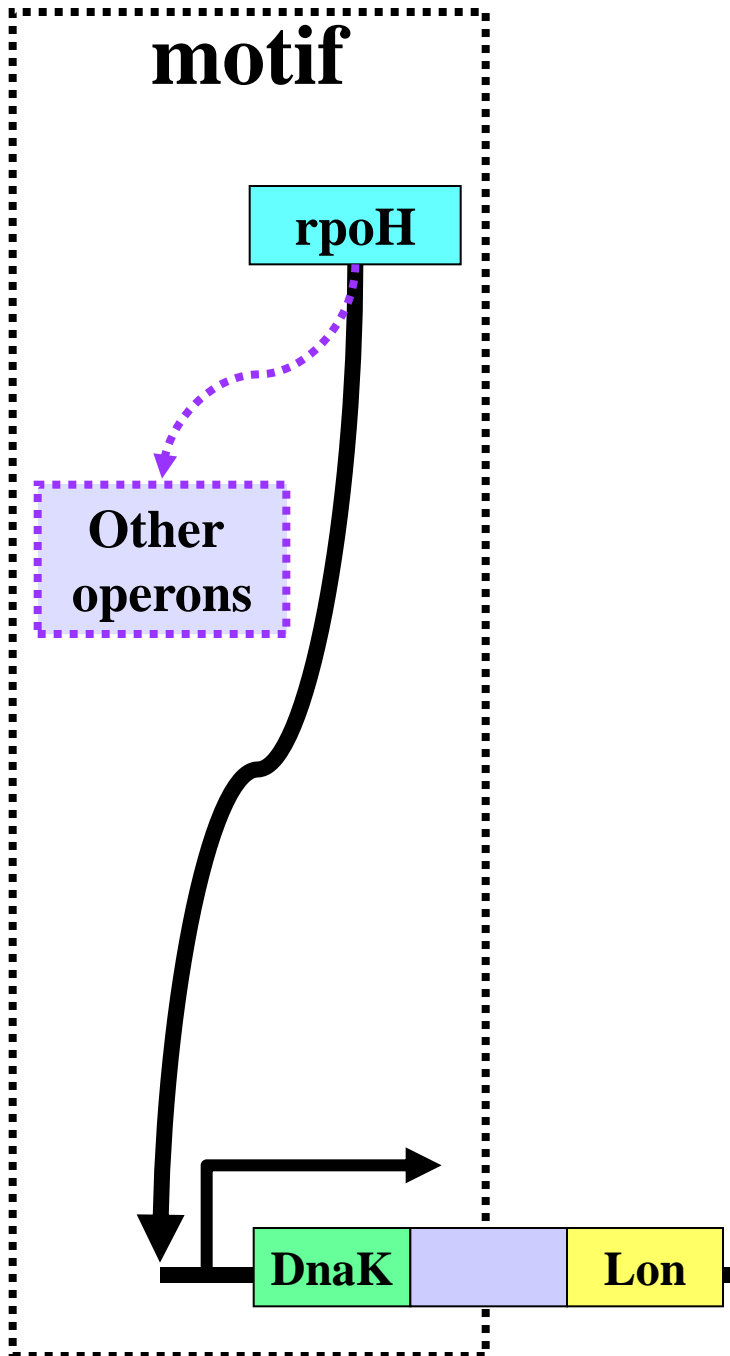




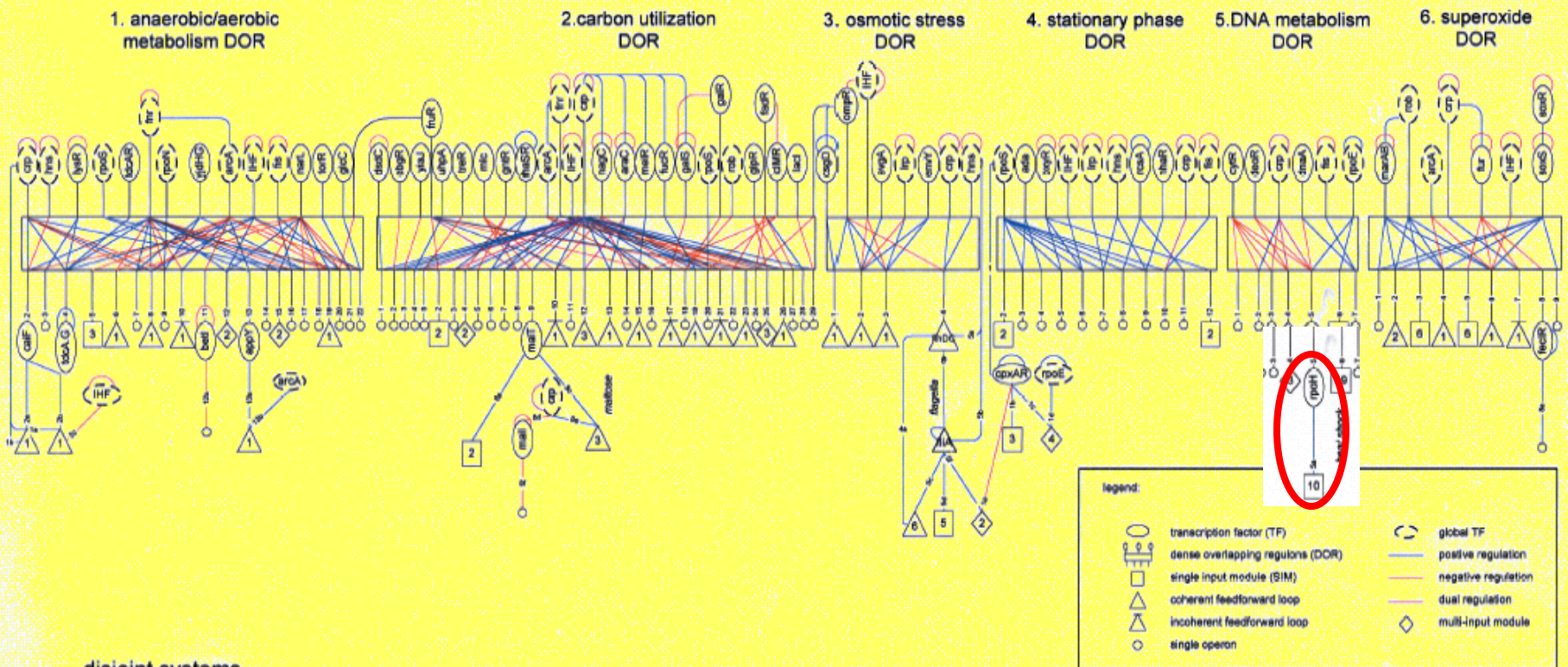
**mRNA activity is  
actively controlled.**







# All at the DNA layer



### disjoint systems

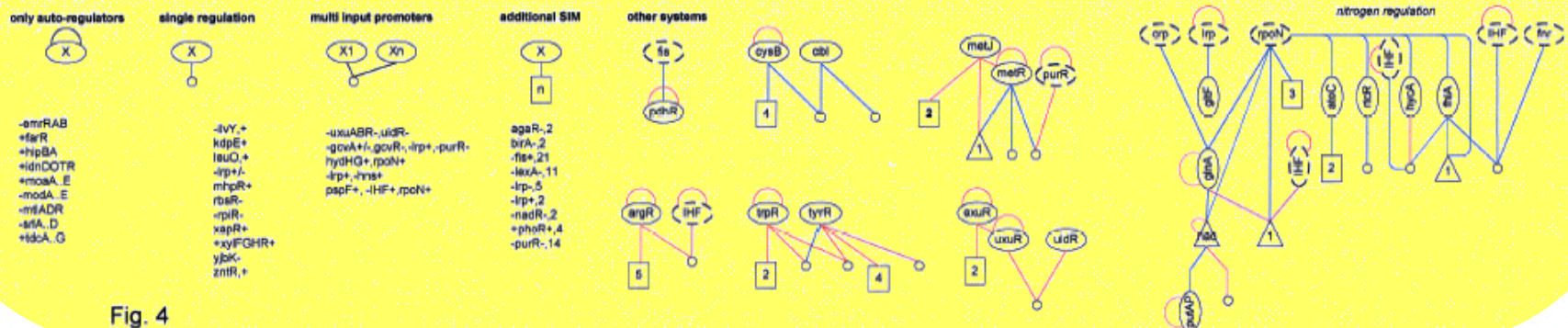


Fig. 4

fan-in  
of diverse  
inputs

universal  
carriers

fan-out  
of diverse  
outputs

Bowties: flows  
within layers

Diverse  
function

**Universal  
Control**

Diverse  
components

**Essential ideas**

Robust  
yet  
fragile

Constraints  
that  
deconstrain



fan-in  
of diverse  
inputs

fan-out  
of diverse  
outputs

Diverse  
function

Diverse  
components

Highly robust

- Diverse
- Evolvable
- Deconstrained

Robust  
yet fragile

Constraints that  
deconstrain

universal  
carriers



Highly fragile

- Universal
- Frozen
- Constrained

**Universal  
Control**

Robust  
yet fragile

Constraints that  
deconstrain

fan-in  
of diverse  
inputs

universal  
carriers

fan-out  
of diverse  
outputs

Bowties: flows  
within layers

Diverse  
function

**Universal  
Control**

Diverse  
components

**Essential ideas**

Robust  
yet  
fragile

Constraints  
that  
deconstrain

What theory is relevant to these more complex feedback systems?

$$\frac{1}{\pi} \int_0^{\infty} \ln |S(j\omega)| \frac{z}{z^2 + \omega^2} d\omega \geq \ln \left| \frac{z+p}{z-p} \right|$$

metabolism  
lineage

source

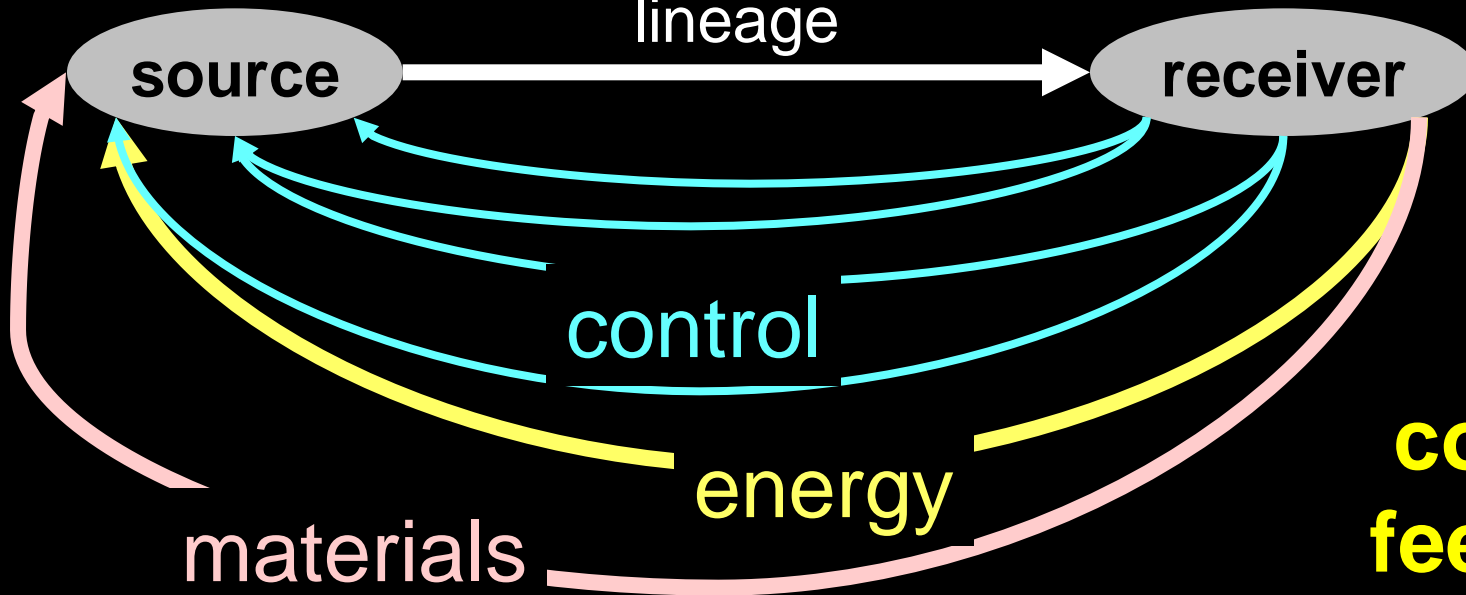
receiver

control

energy

materials

**More  
complex  
feedback**



# New fragilities

- Theft, counterfeiting, fraud, and “creative accounting” are now possible
- Need complex legal infrastructure to protect
- The beginning of a growing complexity-fragility spiral

